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ALFRED SANTELL

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EDITED WITH INTRODUCTIONS ESSAYS AND APPRECIATIONS BY THE LEADING SCHOLARS AND EDUCATORS OF AMERICA.

F. TYLER DANIELS COMPANY, INC.
NEW YORK.

VOLUME VIII

Autobiographers of the Close of the Ancient Regime

(1740—1780)

INCLUDING THE SELF-NARRATIVES OF

MARMONTEL, the French peasant and litterateur; LATUDE, the prisoner who caused the destruction of the Bastille; CASANOVA, the most fascinating of scoundrels; BARON TRENCK, hero of the most stupendous prison escapes; OLIVER GOLDSMITH, most irresponsible and charming of Irish authors; CATHARINE THE GREAT, Empress of Russia; and JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, the noted chemist, philosopher and theologian.

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY BY

EDGAR F. SMITH

President of the University of Pennsylvania

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INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME VIII

AUTOBIOGRAPHERS OF THE CLOSE OF THE ANCIENT REGIME

1740—1780

Rousseau in our last volume showed us the growing spirit of democracy. Our present volume presents the period which approached the very edge of the great democratic revolution, the volcanic outburst with which the masses of the people first asserted their right to rule themselves. The generation just before the 1780's were the last of the sufferers under the "acient regime," the contemptuous rule of a degenerate autocracy. In that final generation it seems as though a literary voice was suddenly given to the victims of the ancient aristocratic tyranny, so that they might put on record for us for all time just what we have escaped, just how cruel, how terrible were in truth those "good old times" whose disappearance is sometimes thoughtlessly deplored by uninvestigative people. Prominent among the autobiographies dealing with those thirty years stand the three most remarkable prison records in existence. They come from three different countries. Baron Trenck suffered in Germany, Casanova in Italy, Latude in France. These three men were born within a year of each other, were imprisoned at nearly the same time, escaped each one of them from the malignant powers which tortured them, and each has left a record of his agonies and achievements.

Of the three, Casanova the Italian most nearly deserved his sufferings. The helpless, happy, irresponsible Italian life which Goldoni depicted for us in the preceding volume, Casanova in his story reveals anew. But Casanova carries us back even more vividly to the splendid medieval energy of Benvenuto Cellini, that wonderful pagan artist and adventurer of an earlier Italian age. Were it not that the outside evidence is absolutely convincing, one could hardly believe that any

man could have achieved the remarkable feats of which Casanova boasts. His escape from the official prison of Venice outrivals the reputed exploits of the English Jack Sheppard, and he describes it with a verve and passion that match with fiction of the highest order. Casanova comes near to being, perhaps he might fairly be ranked, as Europe's most famous scoundrel.

Of wholly different type is the Austrian prison sufferer and prison breaker, Baron Frederick Trenck. Trenck had the misfortune to arouse the enmity of Frederick the Great of Prussia, of whose cynic sternness we read in a preceding volume; and the king had the young nobleman imprisoned, without bothering to assign any special reason for the punishment. Trenck was a man of enormous physical strength, else he could never have survived the hardships inflicted upon him. He was also possessed of superb patience, buoyancy, and self-confidence, otherwise his spirit must have failed him. He achieved one prison escape after another, mastering every device of bolt and bar and shackle which his jailors could contrive. What Casanova did once, Trenck did a dozen times, only to be again captured and loaded down with chains by the far-extending and unpitying power of his royal persecutor. The fact that Trenck's high-ranking Austrian connections ultimately secured him pardon and a precarious freedom during "good" behavior, prevents him from voicing in his book the furious resentment against King Frederick which must have seethed within him if he was in any way human. Yet one of the strangest facts of the ancient regime of royal tyranny is that its victims, if members of that nobility that usually prospered under it, seem to have upheld the kingly system even as they perished under it. They had never learned to look beyond it; their king was to them as a visible god before whose wrath they bowed themselves, as men bow to death.

When however we turn from Germany to France, to look at the life history of that third noted prison victim, Latude, we find a different temper. France, thanks to Voltaire and Rousseau, was beginning to awake. France, when her kings were evil, began to raise a daring voice to ask, were they necessary evils. When the hideous narrative of Latude was spread through France, the mass of his countrymen learned

to hate State prisons with such a horror that the one which was ever before their eyes in Paris, the Bastille, became an object of universal execration. In cold fact the Bastille proved perhaps the least severe, the least torturing of Latude's many prisons; but it became to his countrymen a symbol. When the French Revolution broke out the first cry of the armed mob was "To the Bastille!" And even in our time the day of the destruction of the Bastille is annually celebrated in France as the great national birthday of Democracy.

Nothing could be more wholly typical of the France of the middle eighteenth century, the degeneracy into which her government had fallen, than the story of Latude. A youth coming up to Paris in the reign of Louis XV, he saw that the surest way to fortune, perhaps the only way, was to make a friend of the king's reigning mistress. At that time the mistress was Mme. Pompadour. So Latude hit on the device of pretending to discover a plot against her. Stupid and blundering officials promptly concluded that there might be a real plot, that he might have part in it, and that anyway the easiest thing to do was to make glory for themselves by representing him to the Pampadour as a desperate villain from whom they had saved her.

Thus entangled in a reversed and far more barbarous working out of his own trick, Latude was condemned without a chance of defense, was hurried from prison to prison, and represented to the king, to the Pompadour, and to their officials of justice, as a dangerous criminal. They idly took his persecutors at their word, and rewarded them for apprehending him. Latude by a hundred clever tricks managed to get his appeals for a hearing before many powerful people, but not one of them ever investigated below the surface. For over thirty years Latude was imprisoned, sometimes treated as insane, suffering every form of misery and torture. He was not a strong man, but he was a most persistent one, and where perhaps thousands of others enduring a similar fate would have become really insane or perished, Latude endured. At length, from a new generation which had forgotten him, he won the freedom so carelessly refused him by Louis XV, the Pompadour, and the tricksters who environed them. Such was official France.

Fortunately there was always another side to French life, a side revealed to us by that other noted French autobiographer of those days, Marmontel. Jean François Marmontel was a natural genius. Born as a peasant, he worked his way to education and to literary fame. A suave and kindly man of far less defiant or exacting temperament than Rousseau, he became a friend to everybody, the popular literary idol of both court and people. Of all Marmontel's writings only his autobiography has reached a permanent and universal fame. Its pictures of the simple family life of both his peasant youth and his prosperous maturity show French life at its best. As we read Marmontel's charming tale we realize the great truth that with him and such as he lies the real France, the rich, clean living and clear thinking France that has endured and will endure. Upon the surface of that true France, the reckless royal courts, or hysterical Paris "boulevardeurs" or bloody mobs, have been but temporary disfiguring excrescences.

We have no good British autobiography of this immediate period, unless we look back to Hume, or forward in our next volume to Edward Gibbon. But we have from Oliver Goldsmith, that most charming and irresponsible of Irish writers in London, many fragments of autobiography both in his poems and in his letters. Britain was preparing in a slow, ponderous, hesitant way for a readjustment between democracy and aristocracy almost as decided as that which was to come in France; and of that coming change Oliver Goldsmith's writings may well stand as a sign. His letters give many glimpses of the coming freedom of thought and greater equality of spirit which was tending toward democracy.

One more autobiographical fragment, in some ways the most remarkable of its generation, closes our volume. This is the diary which the mighty Russian Empress, Catherine the Great, kept of her early years at the Russian court. She did not continue her record through the later years of her power and her crime. But this early diary is justly accounted one of the most valuable human documents in existence. It shows us, for one thing, how ogresses are made, how you could take an exceptionally able and well-meaning young woman, and by the ordinary methods of ancient court-life gradually sap her

virtue and her humanity and her every kindly natural thought, and harden her at last into that something scarcely human which made Catherine as powerful as an empress as she was evil as a woman.

Her diary shows us a Russian court more coarse and cruel even than those which it imitated in France or Prussia, an uncouth and hideous barbaric echo of courts which themselves were as barbaric at heart as they were spectacular upon the surface. It is well indeed that every modern man should read for himself the Princess Catherine's astounding revelation of how a "royal life" was really carried out in the eighteenth century.

DR. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY

By Edgar F. Smith, Sc.D., LL.D.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY—history of life—is worthy the attention of young and old. There is no more delightful, entertaining reading. It is a teacher of the rarest quality. It is sure to inspire those who consider it thoughtfully. In my opinion it illuminates many chapters in the world's history, in the history of science and of literature; indeed, the facts and theories of any science are better understood if those who contributed to them are understood, as they may be through autobiographies.

While I write these lines there are within easy reach of my hand the lock and key of the door of Priestley's home at Birmingham, England; also the chemical balance and small hand scale used by him and brought by him to his exile home in America, and a series of prints and photographs of himself, of his English home and of his Northumberland home, of various physical and chemical apparatus used by him, as well as copies of his pioneer works on Electricity, on Colors, on the History of the Church, and suggestions for changes in the customary University curriculum which would be directly contributory to the student's advantage in the business and manufacturing world. And there, also, is the first plain, popular, brief and unanswerable book on the principles of civil government with his lectures on History and Civil Policy, and his investigations on the principles on which governments ought to be founded. These attest his uncommonly varied literary character and demonstrate clearly that he never was an advocate for violent or precipitate reform.

Quietly reading these books and reflecting upon their contents one is profoundly impressed with the vast erudition and logical acumen of the man, who, in addition to all these, brought to the world's attention that marvelous element—

oxygen—the most remarkable of all the chemical elements, and numerous other chemical and physical facts, discovered by experiments made, quite often, under most trying circumstances.

Contemplating his achievements in so many diverse directions the conclusion reached, if any thought at all were given to the autobiography of such an accomplished scholar and philosopher, would be that there would appear somewhere a flattering setting forth of his observations and discoveries; in other words, that his own importance would be very clearly indicated. I confess that I rather expected his autobiography, or more correctly *Memoirs,* to give evidences of this character. And how completely I was mistaken! I had the privilege of reading the original manuscript of the *Memoirs,* and when I first held that original manuscript in hand, I actually trembled. I was overwhelmed by the thought that I had in my own hands the paper on which Priestley's hands had rested and was perusing his own copy—reading his narrative of himself. But there was nothing of the egotist about it. The story was exceedingly simple. I expected as I rapidly proceeded that somewhere I would meet his declaration of superiority, but no—I finished the story without encountering a boastful egotist. It is really beautiful; first, the efforts and trials of a young man eager for knowledge, handicapped in many ways, but finally winning; then, the assumption of a life work as minister to a very insignificant and poor congregation but despite the absence of real needs never murmuring, only giving the best of himself to his people. Years of service such as this, lived cheerfully without the slightest discontent, accepting quietly whatever befell him, were followed by a gradual improvement which came as a consequence of contact with men of affairs. Devoting himself to new problems, passing from one to the other for relaxation, he was never idle. This explains the accomplishment of the great things achieved by Priestley.

"Who can behold without indignation a Priestley struggling with poverty and contempt at Needham, and languishing on a salary of less than one hundred and fifty dollars a year?" What a picture he drew too of many people in this world when he narrated how on coming to preach "at a certain place, the

genteeler part of the audience carefully absented themselves, but some time later when he had attained distinction in the world the very same persons came in crowds to hear him, and extolled a discourse that they had formerly slighted and despised!''

The reader of the *Memoirs* will be impressed by a spirit of earnestness, trustfulness and eagerness to be of real service. ''No man ever labored with an eye more single to public utility than Priestley.'' The life may well be taken as a model by young men thrown into the world without anything—left to struggle for themselves. Priestley succeeded, and they will succeed if animated by his spirit. Modest, untiring, devoted to truth, fearless in maintaining his principles—a sufferer often for what he thought to be right, yet never unhappy. His reward came to him in many ways but none of them was so great as the discovery of the life sustaining principle of the air we breathe. For him was reserved this epoch-making observation, and because of it, his name will never fail from the pages of human discovery and endeavor. One cannot read the *Memoirs* without the feeling of contact with a great soul, and there follows naturally the desire to imitate, if possible, his sturdy principles of life.

JEAN FRANCOIS MARMONTEL

A FRENCH PEASANT WHO BECAME A LITERARY CELEBRITY

1723-1799

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Prize poems, dramas, librettos for operas, essays, moral tales came from the pen of Marmontel, and all of these were acclaimed by the society of the *ancien régime* in France, but of his many works Marmontel is best remembered and beloved for his memoirs, originally written for the edification and guidance of his children. In one of his illuminating "portraits," Sainte-Beuve gives Marmontel a recommendation that he vouchsafed to few. Says this famous litterateur:

"Posterity, more and more, seems to me like a hurried traveler packing his bag, who has only room for a small number of choice volumes. Critic, you have the honor to be for the moment the cataloguer, the secretary, the confidential librarian, if such a thing may be, to Posterity, give him quickly the names of the volumes which he must remember and read. Make haste! the train is ready, the fire is hot, the steam is up, our traveler has only a moment. You have mentioned Marmontel; but what work of Marmontel's do you advise? I do not hesitate; I say the 'Memoirs,' nothing but the 'Memoirs.' But at each new departure I insist that they shall not be forgotten."

And why should they not be forgotten? For many excellent reasons. Chief among them, perhaps, is that Marmontel has given us one of the truest, sweetest pictures of rustic life in a so-called corrupt period. Too readily we accept the French of Louis XV as a people given up to license and levity, our minds colored by the tone of the socially supreme, in their brilliant wit and deadened morals. But we forget, often, that this stratum of society is rarely, if ever, truly representative of a nation. Marmontel in his charming, courteous manner drives this truth home. Peasant boy himself, he depicts the life of the humble with love and fidelity. His description of his family in their lowly cot, which probably would have answered for thousands of others at the time, is a classic idyl, and in all literature there is hardly a more delightful portrayal of domestic innocence and harmony.

But with equal kindliness Marmontel introduces us to the élite and

celebrated of the land—Voltaire, Diderot, D'Alembert, Buffon, Helvetius, Raynal, Rousseau, Madame Pompadour, Madame Geoffrin, Mademoiselle Lespinasse, Mademoiselle Clairon, and many others. His gallery of personages is rich in variety and detail. Marvelously he reproduces the world of his time for us. And he is singularly free from prejudice and spleen. His eyes are optimistic until the cloud of the Revolution obscures his sight, and even then we find him hoping against hope, his faith and fealty given to the unfortunate Louis XVI. He remained stanch to that monarch and deplored the brutality and madness of the populace.

However, for the most part, we see him in his autobiography as a happy, honored man, naïve and unpretentious under every condition, whether he was in a wintry garret staying in bed to keep warm, or dining in elegance with the lords and ladies of State. Mild and amiable as he was, we must record that these qualities did not spring from complaisance. He was fearless in his convictions, as one of his last public acts bears witness to. In 1797 he was elected to the Council of Ancients, and expressly charged to defend in the National Assembly the cause of the Catholic religion, then proscribed and persecuted—a task without grace; but his discourse was a brave and noble plea for the free exercise of worship.

Marmontel died suddenly of apoplexy on the last day of the year 1799.

MEMOIRS OF JEAN FRANÇOIS MARMONTEL

BOOK I

It is for my children that I write the history of my life: it was their mother's wish. Should it meet the eyes of a stranger, let him pardon details which to him must appear minute and trifling, but which to them I think necessary. It may be useful to my children to collect the lessons that time, opportunity, example, and the various scenes through which I have passed have afforded me. I could wish them to learn from me never to despair of their own powers, but never to be too confident of success; to fear the rocks of good fortune, and to pass with courage the straits of adversity.

I have had an advantage over them in being born in a place where inequality of birth and fortune were scarcely felt. A small property, some industry, or some small trade constituted the chief wealth of the inhabitants of Bort, a little town in Limosin, where I was born. Mediocrity prevailed, not riches: for here all were free and usefully employed.

Thus the independence, frankness, and native nobility of the mind were perverted by no servile manners; for nowhere was stupid pride worse received or sooner corrected. Hence I may say that, during my childhood, although born in obscurity, I knew only my equals; and hence perhaps a little stiffness arose, which has ever made a part of my character, and which even reason and age have never sufficiently softened.

Bort, seated on the Dordogne between Auvergne and Limousin, presents at the first view a fearful picture to the traveler, who, at a distance, from the top of the hill, sees it at the bottom of a precipice threatened with inundation by the torrents that the storms occasion, or with instant annihilation by a chain of volcanic rocks, some planted like towers on the height that commands the town, and others already hanging and half torn from their base. But Bort assumes an aspect more gay, as these fears are dissipated, and the eye extends itself along the valley. On the verdant island that lies beyond the town, surrounded by the stream, and animated by the noise and motion of a mill, is a grove filled with birds. On each bank of the river, orchards, meadows, and cornfields, cultivated by a laborious people, form the varied landscape. Below the town the valley opens, presenting on one side an extensive meadow watered by continual springs, and on the other fields crowned by a circle of hills, whose gentle slope forms a pleasing contrast with the opposite rocks. Farther on, this circle is broken by a torrent, which, descending from the mountains, rolls and bounds through forests, among rocks, and over precipices, till it falls into the Dordogne, by one of the most beautiful cataracts of the continent, both for the volume of water and the height of its fall; a phenomenon which only wants more frequent spectators to be renowned and admired. It is near this cataract that the little farm of St. Thomas lies, where I used to read Virgil under the shade of the blossoming trees that surrounded our beehives, and where their honey afforded me many a delicious repast. It is on the other side of the town, beyond the mill, and on the slope of the mountain, that the garden lies, where, on welcome holidays, my father used to lead me to gather grapes from the vines which he himself had planted, or cher-

ries, plums, and apples from the trces he had grafted. But the principal charm that my native village has left on my memory arises from the vivid impression I still retain of the first feelings with which my soul was imbued and penetrated by the inexpressible tenderness that my parents showed me. If I have any kindness in my character I am persuaded that I owe it to these gentle emotions; to the habitual happiness of loving and being loved. Ah! what a gift do we receive from Heaven, when we are so fortunate as to be blessed with kind, affectionate parents!

I also owed much to a certain amenity of manners that then distinguished my native place; and indeed the simple, gentle life we led there must have had some attraction, since nothing was more rare than to see it deserted by the natives. Their youth were well instructed, and their colony held a distinguished rank in the neighboring schools: but they returned again to their town, like a swarm of bees to the hive, with the sweets they had collected. I learned to read in a little convent of nuns, the good friends of my mother. They taught only girls; but in my favor they made an exception to this rule. A lady of birth, who had long lived retired in this convent, had the kindness to take care of me. I ought indeed to cherish her memory, and that of the nuns, who loved me as their child. I passed from the convent to the school of a priest in town, who voluntarily, and without any gratuity, had devoted himself to the instruction of children. The only son of a shoemaker, and the worthiest man in the world, this divine was a true model of filial piety. How well do I recollect the becoming respect and mutual attentions that this old man and his son had for each other; the former never forgetting the dignity of the priesthood, nor the latter the sanctity of the paternal character. The Abbé Vaissière (this was his name), after having fulfilled his duties at church, divided the rest of his time between reading and the lessons he gave us.

My Latin lessons were interrupted by a singular accident. I had a great desire to learn, but nature had refused me the gift of memory. I had enough to retain the sense of what I read; but the words left no traces on my mind: I took infinite pains to fix them there, but it was like writing on a quick-

sand. I obstinately endeavored by perseverance to supply the defect; and this labor exceeded the powers of my age, so that my nerves were affected. I became unable to take proper rest: in the night, when fast asleep, I used to sit up in my bed, and, with my eyes half open, repeat aloud the lessons I had learned. "He will be mad," said my father to my mother, "if you do not make him leave off that unfortunate Latin"; and I refrained from the study: but at the expiration of eight or ten months it was resumed; and, when I had completed my eleventh year, my master, thinking me sufficiently advanced to be admitted into the fourth class, my father consented, though with regret, to take me himself to the school of Mauriac, which was the nearest to Bort.

This regret of my father was that of a prudent man, which it is my duty to show. I was the eldest of a great number of children: my father, a little severe, but essentially kind, under a rough and stern exterior, loved his wife to adoration: and with reason; my tender mother was the worthiest and most interesting of women, and truly amiable in her family. I never could imagine how, with the simple education of our little convent at Bort, she had acquired so much polish of mind with such elevation of soul, and, particularly in her language and style, a feeling of propriety so just, so delicate, so refined, that it appeared in her to be the pure instinct of taste. My good Bishop of Limoges, the virtuous Coetlosquet, has often spoken to me, at Paris, with the tenderest interest, of the letters my mother had written to him to recommend me to his kindness.

My father had no less veneration than love for her. His only cause of reproach was her weakness for me, and this weakness had one excuse: I was the only one of her children that she had suckled; her ill health did not again permit her to fulfill so sweet a duty. Her mother was not less fond of me; I think I now see the good little old woman: what a charming temper! what sweet and smiling gayety! She was the housekeeper, the mistress of the family, and gave us all an example of filial tenderness; for she too had a mother and her husband's mother, on whom she lavished her attentions. I am going rather far back when I talk of my great-grandmothers, but I well remember that, at the age of eighty, they

were still living, drinking their glass of wine by the fireside, and recollecting old times, of which they told us wonders.

Add to the family three sisters of my grandmother, and an aunt, the sister of my mother, who is still living: my father was the only man, among all these women and a swarm of children.

The property on which we all subsisted was very small. Order, domestic arrangement, labor, a little trade, and frugality kept us above want.

But, however, though extremely moderate, the expense of the house did not fail to be nearly the measure of our little revenue; and when the time came to place me at college, my father dreaded the expense of my education; beside, he considered the time that was given to study as but ill employed: he used to say that Latin only made sluggards. Perhaps, too, he had some presentiment of the misfortunes we afterwards experienced when deprived of him by a premature death; and, by making me early embrace a profession the utility of which would be less tardy and less uncertain, he might hope to leave in me a second father to his children. Yet, pressed by my mother, who was passionately desirous that at least her eldest son should receive a classical education, he consented to take me to the school at Mauriac.

I was lodged, as was the custom of the school, with five other scholars, at the house of an honest mechanic; and my father, sad enough to return without me, left me there with my packet and provisions for the week: these provisions consisted in a large loaf of rye bread, a little cheese, a piece of bacon, and two or three pounds of beef; my mother had added to them a dozen apples. This was the weekly provision of the best-fed scholars of the school. The mistress of the house cooked for us, and for her trouble, her fire, her lamp, her beds, her house-room, and even including the vegetables of her little garden which she used for our soup, we gave her twelve pence halfpenny apiece per month; so that, reckoning everything, except my clothes, I might cost my father between four and five pounds a year.

From the month of October, in which we then were, to the Easter holidays, there was neither amusement nor relaxation for me; but after that half-year, familiar with all the rules,

firm in their application, and as it were disengaged from the thorns of syntax, I proceeded with more freedom. After that period I was one of the best scholars in the class, and perhaps the happiest; for I loved my task, and, almost certain of doing it tolerably well, it was only a recreation.

A custom, which I have never seen but in this school, gave, toward the end of the year, redoubled fervor to our studies. To rise from one class to another, it was necessary to undergo a severe examination, and one of the tasks we had to accomplish was a work of memory. According to the class, in poetry, some lines of Phædrus, Ovid, Virgil, or Horace were to be studied; and in prose, parts of Cicero, of Livy, of Quintus Curtius, or of Sallust: the whole, to be retained by rote, formed a very considerable mass of study. We began it long before the examination, and, that it might not trench on our usual studies, it employed us from daylight to the morning's lesson. We used to learn it in the fields, where, divided into bands, each his book in his hand, we went humming along like swarms of bees.

The spirit of religion, which was carefully maintained in the school, was an advantage still more precious than emulation. How salutary a preservative, for the morals of youth, is the custom and obligation of going every month to confession! That modest, chaste, and humble of our most secret faults prevented perhaps a greater number of them than all the most holy motives.

It was then at Mauriac, from the age of eleven to fifteen, that I pursued my classical studies; and in rhetoric I almost habitually kept my place as first in my class. At this my kind mother was charmed; and, when my dimity waistcoats were returned to her, she eagerly looked to see whether the silver chain that used to suspend the cross had blackened my buttonhole: if she perceived that mark of my triumph, all the mothers of the neighborhood were told of her joy; our good nuns returned thanks to Heaven; and my dear Abbé Vassière shone with resplendent glory.

The short vacations at Christmas were passed by my parents and myself in the mutual enjoyment of tenderness, without any other diversion than that afforded by the duties of kindness and affection. As the season was sharp, my liveliest

pleasure was that of finding myself at my ease by a good fire; for at Mauriac, even during the severest cold, when surrounded by ice, and when in going to school we had every morning to trace our way in the snow, we found at the house where we lodged no other fire on our return than a few half-burnt billets that hissed at each other under the boiler, and at which we were scarcely permitted in turn to thaw our fingers. Frequently, as our hosts sat and surrounded the chimney, it was a favor to let us approach. In the evening too, when studying, and our fingers benumbed with cold refused to hold the pen, the lamp afforded the only flame at which we could revive them. Some of my companions, who, bred on the heights, and hardened to cold, endured it better than I, used to accuse me of delicacy; and, in a chamber where the cold wind blew in at the cracks in the windows, thinking it ridiculous that I should be chilled, they mocked at my shivering. I also used to reproach myself for being so chilly and tender, and often accompanied others, on the ice and in deep snows, to accustom myself, if possible, to the severity of winter: I conquered nature, but did not change it: I only learnt to suffer. Thus, when I went home, and, in a good bed or by the corner of a good fire, I felt myself revived, it was one of the most delicious moments of my life; an enjoyment that luxury would never have taught me.

In these Christmas holidays my good grandmother used to confide to me, with all due mystery, the secrets of the house. She used to show me, as so many treasures, the provision she had made for the winter. Her bacon, her hams, her sausages, her pots of honey, her vases of oil, her piles of buckwheat, of barley, of peas and beans, her heaps of turnips and chestnuts, and her beds of straw covered with fruits. "See, my dear," would she say, "these are the gifts Providence has sent: how many honest families have not received so much as we! and what thanks ought we to return for these favors!"

In the long vacations at the end of the year, all my duties fulfilled and all my tastes satisfied, I had still some time to give to society; and that of the young girls, I confess, became every year more pleasing to me; but it was not until the age of fifteen that I felt all its charms. The connections that

were formed there did not at all disquiet our families: there was so little inequality of condition and fortune, that the parents were almost as soon agreed as their children; and after marriage, love did not often languish: but that which was attended with no danger to my companions might extinguish my emulation, and make the fruit of my studies abortive.

I saw hearts choosing and forming ties with each other; example inspired me with a similar inclination. One of our young companions, and the prettiest to my taste, appeared to me still disengaged, and, like me, to have only the vague desire of pleasing. In her freshness, she had not that tender and soft brilliancy with which beauty is painted, when it is compared to the rose; but the lively red, the down, and roundness of the peach afford you an image that very much resembled her. As for wit, with so sweet a mouth, could she be without it? Her eyes and her smile would alone have given wit and grace to her simple language; and from her lips "good-day" and "good-night" seemed to me exquisitely delicate. She might be one or two years older than I, and this inequality of age, that an air of steadiness and prudence rendered still more imposing, intimidated my dawning love; but by degrees, in trying to make my attentions please her, I perceived they affected her; and from the moment I thought I had won her heart, I loved her in good earnest. Of this I made her a plain avowal, and she as plainly answered me that her inclinations were not at variance with mine. "But you well know," said she, "that, to be lovers, we must hope one day to be married; and how can we expect it at our age? You are scarcely fifteen; and are not you going to pursue your studies?" "Yes," I replied, "such is my determination, and the wish of my mother." "Well, then, here will be five years of absence before you can be fixed in life, and I shall be more than twenty, without knowing for what you are destined." "Alas! it is too true," said I, "that I know not what will become of me; but promise me, at least, never to marry without consulting my mother, nor without asking her whether I have not some hope to offer you." She gave me her promise with a charming smile; and, during the rest of the vacation, we abandoned ourselves to the pleasure of

loving each other with the ingenuousness and innocence of our age. Our private walks, our most interesting conversations, were passed in imagining for me possibilities of future success or fortune that might favor our wishes; but, as these sweet illusions succeed each other like dreams, the one effaced the other, and, after they had delighted us for a moment, we finished by weeping over them, as children weep when a breath overturns the house of cards they have built.

My father, on his return from a journey he had just been making to Clermont, informed us it was his intention to take me there,—not, as my mother would have wished, to continue my studies, and pursue a course of philosophy, but to learn a trade. "He has enough of study and Latin," said he; "it is time to think of giving him some useful employment. I have got a place for him in the house of a rich merchant: the counting-house shall be his school." My mother combated this resolution with all the force of affection, grief, and tears; but I, perceiving that she afflicted my father without dissuading him, persuaded her to comply. "Let me but once get to Clermont," said I to her, "and I will find means to satisfy you both." Had I followed only the dictates of my new passion, I should have been of my father's opinion; for trade, in a few years, might have put me in a tolerably happy situation. But neither my passion for study, nor the will of my mother, which, while she lived, was ever my supreme law, would suffer me to take counsel of my love. I set out, then, with the intention of reserving, morning and evening, an hour and a half of my time for the continuance of my studies; and, by assuring the merchant that all the rest of the day should be his, I flattered myself that he would be contented. But he would not hear a word of this composition, and it became necessary to choose between trade and study. "What! sir," said I, "will not eight hours a day of assiduous application in your counting-room suffice? What would you require from a slave?" He answered that it depended on me to go and be more free elsewhere. I did not give him time to repeat it, and instantly took my leave.

All my riches consisted of two half-crowns, which my father had given me for pocket-money, and some sixpenny pieces that my grandmother had slid into my hand, as she bade me

farewell. But the poverty that threatened me was the least of my cares. In quitting the employment to which my father had destined me, I was acting contrary to his will, and I seemed to be withdrawing myself from his authority. Would he pardon me? Would be not exert his authority to reduce me to obedience? And if even, in his anger, he should abandon me, with what bitterness would he accuse my mother of having contributed to my ruin? The bare idea of the vexation I should cause my mother was an acute punishment. My mind agitated and my spirits broken, I entered a church and betook myself to prayer, the last refuge of the unhappy. There, as by inspiration, a thought struck me, that suddenly changed the prospect of my life and my dream of the future.

Reconciled to myself, hoping to be so with my father, by the sanctity of the motion I was about to offer him, I began by securing myself a lodging, and hired a little garret near the college, the furniture of which consisted of a bed, a table, and a chair; the whole for fivepence a week, I not being in a situation to make a longer agreement. To this furniture I added a hermit's vessel, and made my provision of bread, plain water and plums.

After I was settled, and had made, in the evening, a frugal supper at home, I went to bed; I slept but little, and the next day I wrote two letters: one to my mother, in which I exposed to her the cruel refusal I had experienced from the inflexible merchant; the other to my father, in which, assuming the language of religion and nature, I entreated him, with tears, not to oppose the resolution that inspired me of consecrating myself to the church. The sentiment I thought I felt for that sacred vocation was indeed so sincere, and my faith in the designs and cares of Providence was then so lively, that in my letter to my father I announced the almost certain hope of being no longer any expense to him; and, to continue my studies, I only asked of him his consent and blessing.

My letter was a text for the eloquence of my mother. She thought she saw my route traced out by angels, and beaming with light, like the ladder of Jacob. My father, with less weakness, had not less piety. He suffered himself to be persuaded, and permitted my mother to write me word that he consented to my pious resolutions. At the same time she

sent me some succor in money, of which I made little use, and which I was soon in a situation to return to her just as I had received it.

BOOK II

To please my professor, I consented, against my inclination, to engage in public disputations. He attached a vast importance to the numbering me among those of his pupils who were soon to appear in public: and, as he was a member of the Academy of Sciences at Toulouse, he would have my thesis dedicated to that company. "A thesis thus honored," said he, "will be equally new and striking." It was by this exhibition that he wished to terminate his philosophic career; and he conceived the project of adding to the pomp of this spectacle a signal testimony in my favor, which, though very honorable to me, should completely astonish me. He succeeded but too well; and my astonishment was such that it had nearly made me mad, or foolish, for the rest of my life.

But the solid benefit I derived from these youthful successes was the number of pupils that increased my school, and enabled me to send additional aid to my mother. Rich enough, by my industry, to provide for the education of the eldest of my brothers, I now lent him a helping hand and brought him to Toulouse. He was fourteen, and did not know a word of Latin; but he had a very lively conception, an excellent memory, and a passionate desire of profiting by my lessons. I simplified the rules and abridged the method; in six months he had surmounted all the difficulties of syntax; and a year more well employed enabled him to proceed without a master. That was his ambition; for he saw me overloaded with employment, and was gratified when he could lighten it. Poor brother! The sentiment he felt for me was not friendship only, it was idolatry. The name of brother had, in his mouth, a character of sanctity. He expressed to me his desire of dedicating himself to the church, and of this I was glad: for this same desire began to cool in me for more than one reason, and particularly on account of the forbidding difficulties that were thrown in my way.

When I presented myself to the archbishop, to beg him

to obtain from the bishop of my diocese a permission to be ordained by him, I found him quite prejudiced against me: "I was only a gallant abbé, wholly occupied with poetry, paying my court to the ladies, and writing songs and idyls for them, nay, sometimes, in the dusk of the evening, taking my walk with pretty girls." This archbishop was La Roche-Aymond, a man of little delicacy in his political morality, but affecting rigor for vices that were not his own.

My correspondence with Voltaire, to whom I sometimes wrote as I sent him my poetry, and who had the kindness to answer me, had not a little contributed to change my fancy for this profession.

Voltaire, in encouraging me to hope for success in the career of poetry, pressed me to go to Paris, the only school of taste where talent can form itself. I answered him that Paris was too vast a theater for me; that I should there be lost in the crowd; that, beside, being born without fortune, I should want the means of existence; that at Toulouse I had created myself a comfortable and honorable livelihood, and that, unless Paris could offer me one nearly equal, I should still have the fortitude to resist my desire of going to render my homage to the great man who so kindly deigned to invite me.

However, it soon became necessary to decide. Literature at Paris, the bar at Toulouse, or the seminary at Limoges: these were what offered themselves, and in each I beheld only uncertainty and delay. In this irresolution I felt the necessity of consulting my mother. I had no idea she was ill, but I knew she was feeble: I hoped that my presence would restore her to health: I went to see her. How charming, how delightful, would this journey have been to me, had it corresponded to so dear a hope!

I leave my brother at Toulouse; and, on a little horse I had bought, I set off: I arrive at the farm, at the hamlet of St. Thomas. It was a holiday. My eldest sister, and the daughter of my aunt D'Albois, had come thither for a walk. There I rest myself, and change my clothes; for I carried in a bundle, in my cloak-bag, all the dress of an abbé. From St. Thomas to Bort, by fording the river, there is but one meadow to cross. I take the two girls across the

river on my horse, and I arrive at the town by that charming walk. Pardon these details: I repeat it again, it is for my children that I write.

As I passed by the church, the people were at vespers; one of my old school-fellows, Odde, the same that afterward married my sister, met me as he was going there, and he soon spread the news of my arrival in the church. My friends first steal out, then our neighbors, and insensibly the whole congregation; the church is empty, and my house is soon filled and surrounded by this crowd, who come to see me. Alas! I was at that moment severely afflicted. I had just embraced my mother; and in her thinness, in her cough, in the burning red that colored her cheek, I thought I recognized the same disorder of which my father died. It was but too true; my mother was attacked by it before the age of forty. That fatal consumption was contagious in my family, and made most cruel ravages. I did all that was possible to conceal from my mother the grief that seized me. She, who knew her disorder, forgot it, or at least appeared to forget it, on seeing me, and spoke only of her joy. I afterwards learnt that she had engaged the physician and my aunts to flatter me on the state of her health, and not suffer me to indulge my inquietude. They all united with her to deceive me, and my soul caught eagerly at the gentle hope.

I at last spoke to her of the diminished ardor I felt for the profession of the church, and of my irresolution about the choice of a new one. It was then that she appeared calm, and spoke to me coolly.

"The profession of the church," said she, "essentially imposes two duties; that of being pious, and that of being chaste: it is impossible to be a good priest but at this price, and on these two points it belongs to you to examine yourself. As to the bar, if you enter there, I must require from you the most inviolable promise that you will never affirm what you do not believe to be true, nor ever defend what you believe is not just. With regard to the career that M. de Voltaire invites you to pursue, I think it a prudent precaution to assure to yourself at Paris a situation that may leave you time to instruct yourself, and to acquire more talent; for you must not flatter yourself; what you have already done

is but little. If M. de Voltaire can procure you some honorable, liberal, and sure employment, go, my dear son, go, enter the lists of fame and fortune; I consent: but never forget that the most honorable and most dignified companion of genius is virtue." Thus spoke this astonishing woman, who had no other education than that of the little convent at Bort.

Her physician thought it necessary to inform me that my presence was hurtful to her. "Her disorder," said he, "is a blood too vivid and too highly inflamed; I calm it as much as I can, and you involuntarily, nay, necessarily, agitate it again; and every evening I find her pulse more full and quick. If you wish her health to be reëstablished, sir, you must leave her; and, above all, be careful that your parting be not too affecting for her." It was a cruel parting; and in that moment my mother's courage was superior to mine; for she flattered herself no longer, though I continued to hope. At the first word I said to her of the necessity of returning to my pupils, "Yes, my son," said she, "you must go. I have seen you. Our hearts have spoken. We have nothing more to say to each other but a tender farewell, for I have no need to recommend——" She interrupted herself; and, as her eyes filled with tears, "I am thinking," said she, "of that good mother I have lost, and who loved you so. She died like a saint; her joy would have been great to have seen you once again. But let us try to die as like a saint as herself: we shall meet again before God."

I went to complete the course of my studies; and, as I had providentially entered myself at the school for canon law, it is probable that my final decision would have been in favor of the bar. But, toward the end of this year, a little note from Voltaire came and determined me to set off for Paris. "Come," said he in his note, "and come without inquietude. M. Orri, whom I have spoken to, undertakes to provide for you. Signed Voltaire." Who was M. Orri? I knew not. I went to ask my good friends at Toulouse, and showed them my note. "M. Orri!" exclaimed they; "why, 't is the comptroller-general of finance! My dear friend, your fortune is made; you will be a farmer-general. Remember us in your glory. Protected by the minister, it will be easy for you to gain his esteem and confidence. You will

be at the fountain-head of favor. Dear Marmontel, make some of its rivulets flow down to us. A little streamlet of Pactolus will content our ambition." One would be receiver-general, another would be satisfied with an humbler place in the finance, or with some other employment of two or three hundred a year; and this depended on me.

I left my brother at Toulouse; and my scholarship at St. Catherine's would have been secure to him, had he been in the class of philosophy; but these places could be held only during the five years of graduation. He was therefore obliged to renounce this advantage for the present, and I gave him an asylum in the Irish seminary. I paid one year of his schooling in advance, and, when I bade him farewell, left him all the rest of my money, having only one half-crown for myself when I set off from Toulouse. But in passing through Montauban I was to find a fresh supply.

Montauban, as well as Toulouse, had a literary academy, that every year gave a prize. I had gained it this year, and had not taken it away. It was a silver lyre, of the value of twelve guineas. On my arrival, I went and took my lyre, and instantly sold it. Thus, after paying the muleteer in advance the expenses of my journey, and after treating my friends handsomely, who accompanied me in cavalcade as far as Montauban, I had still more than six guineas in my pocket. Was not this an ample provision for one whom fortune awaited at Paris? Never did any one go more slowly to meet her. Yet this journey in the littre was not so tiresome as I should have thought it. I was fortunate in finding an honest muleteer. He gave us most excellent cheer. I have never eaten better red-legged partridges, nor more juicy turkeys, nor better-tasted truffles. I was ashamed at being so well fed for my five guineas, and determined to recompense this honest man as soon as I should be in a situation to be more liberal.

BOOK III

Those young men who, born with some genius and love for the arts, have been introduced into the presence of the most celebrated men in the art that forms their own study and delight, have felt, like me, the confusion, the oppression of

heart, the kind of religious fear, that I experienced on appearing before Voltaire.

Persuaded that I should have to speak first, I had turned in twenty ways the phrase with which I should address him, and was satisfied with none. He relieved me from this difficulty. On hearing my name he came to me, and, extending his arms, "My good friend," said he, "I am very glad to see you. Yet I have bad news to tell you; M. Orri had undertaken to provide for you; M. Orri is no longer in favor."

I could scarcely have received a more severe, more sudden, or more unexpected blow; but I was not stunned by it. I have always been astonished at the courage I have felt on great occasions, for my heart is naturally feeble. "Well, sir," said I, "then I must contend with adversity; I have long known and long struggled with it." "I am glad to find you have confidence in your own powers. Yes, my good friend, the true and most worthy resource of a man of letters is in himself and in his genius. But, till yours shall have procured you something to exist on, I speak to you candidly as a friend, I must provide for you. I have not invited you hither to abandon you. If even at this moment you be in want of money, tell me so: I will not suffer you to have any other creditor than Voltaire." I returned him thanks for his kindness, assuring him that, for some time at least, I should not want to profit by it, and that, when I should, I would confidently have recourse to him. "You promise me," said he, "and I depend on you. In the meantime let's hear what you think of applying to." "I really don't know; you must decide for me." "The stage, my friend, the stage is the most enchanting of all careers; it is there that in one day you may obtain glory and fortune. One successful piece renders a man at the same time rich and celebrated; and if you take pains you will succeed." "I do not want ardor," replied I; "but what should I do for the stage?" "Write a good comedy," said he, in a firm tone. "Alas! sir, how should I draw portraits? I do not know faces." He smiled at this answer. "Well, then, write a tragedy." I answered that I was not quite so ignorant of the passions and the heart, and that I would willingly make

the attempt. Thus passed my first interview with this illustrious man.

On leaving him, I went and took a lodging at three half-crowns a month, near the Sorbonne, at a cook's house in Mason Street, where I had a tolerably good dinner for ninepence. I used to reserve a part of it for my supper, and I lived well. However, my six guineas would not have gone very far. But I found an honest bookseller, who offered to buy the manuscript of my translation of "The Rape of the Lock," and who gave me twelve guineas for it, but in promissory notes, and these notes were at long dates. A Gascon, whose acquaintance I had made at a coffee-house, discovered for me, in the street of St. Andrée-des-Arts, a grocer, who consented to take my notes in payment, provided I would purchase goods of him to that amount. I bought twelve guineas' worth of sugar of him; and, after having paid him, I entreated him to resell it for me. I lost but little by it; and with my six guineas of Montauban, and my eleven pounds fifteen shillings of my sugar, I was enabled to go on till the harvest of academic prizes without borrowing of any one. Eight months of my lodging and my eating would only amount together to eleven guineas and a half. I had therefore near six guineas left for my other expenses. This was quite enough; for, by keeping in bed, I should burn less wood in winter. I might therefore go on with my literary labors till midsummer without inquietude; and, if I gained the prize at the academy, which was twenty guineas, I should get through the year. This calculation kept me in spirits.

I began by studying the art of play-writing. Voltaire furnished me with books. Aristotle's Art of Poetry, P. Corneille's Discourses on the Unities, his Reflections, the Greek tragedians, our modern tragedies, were all eagerly and rapidly devoured. I longed to try my strength; and the first subject that my impatience seized on was the Portuguese revolution. On this I lost some precious time; the political interest of this event was too feeble for the stage; and still more feeble was the manner in which I hastily conceived and executed my project. However, some scenes that I showed to an intelligent player made him augur well of me. But he said that the art of play-writing must be studied at the theater,

and he advised me to engage Voltaire to ask for a free admission for me. "Roselli is right," said Voltaire; "the theater is the school for us all; it must be open to you; and I ought to have thought of it sooner." My free admission to the French theater was liberally granted me: and I afterwards never failed to go and take my lesson there. I cannot express how much this assiduous study hastened the development and progress of my ideas, and of the little talent I might have. I never returned from the representation of a tragedy without some reflections on the nature of the art, nor without some new degree of warmth in my imagination, my heart, and my style.

To draw beautiful tragic subjects from the same sources, it would have been necessary to become a student of history; and I should have had the courage to do this, but I had not time. I looked hastily over ancient history, and, the subject of Dionysius the Tyrant having struck my fancy, I could not rest till the plan of it was formed, and all the incidents of the fable invented and arranged; but I said nothing of it to Voltaire, both that I might proceed alone, and without a guide, and that I might show him my first effort with all the advantage of a finished work.

It was at this time that I met at his house the man whose society has, of all others, most charmed and delighted me, the good, the wise, the virtuous Vauvenargue. In his person, he had been cruelly treated by Nature, but his mind was one of her rarest works. I used to think I beheld in him Fénelon, infirm and suffering. He showed me much kindness, and I easily obtained the permission to go and see him. I should make a good book of his conversations, if I were able to recollect them. Some traces may be seen of them in the collection he has left of his thoughts and meditations. But, eloquent and feeling as he is in his writings, it seems to me that he was still more so in his conversations with us. I say *with us,* because I generally found with him a man who was wholly devoted to him, and who for that reason soon gained my confidence and esteem. This man was Beauvin, the same who has since given to the stage the tragedy of the Cheruscians, a man of sense and taste, but of an indolent disposition; devoted to pleasure, though as poor as myself.

As our sentiments for the Marquis of Vauvenargue so perfectly accorded, they established between us a kind of sympathy. We used to meet every evening, after the play, at the procope coffee-house, the tribunal of criticism, and the school for young poets, to study the humor and taste of the public. There we always conversed together; and when there was no play, we passed our evenings in retired walks. Thus we became every day more necessary to each other, and every day felt more regret at separating. "And why should we separate?" said he at last; "why not live together? The green-grocer, at whose house I lodge, has a chamber to let; and, by living at a common expense, we shall spend less." I answered that this arrangement would please me exceedingly; but that for the moment I could not think of it: he insisted, and pressed me so strongly that I was obliged to tell him why I refused. "In the house where I now live," said I, "the punctuality with which I have hitherto paid has necessarily gained me a degree of credit which I should not find elsewhere, and of which I may perhaps soon have occasion to make use." Beauvin, who had twelve or fifteen guineas, bade me be under no anxiety; that he could advance me money, and that he had a plan in his head to enrich us both. On my part I displayed to him my hopes and resources; I showed him the piece I had written for the prize of the academy; he thought it a bar of gold. I told him the plan, and read to him the first scenes of my tragedy; he answered for its success; and this was a mine of silver. The Marquis of Vauvenargue lived at the Hôtel de Tours, Petite Rue du Paon, and opposite this hotel was the house of Beauvin's green-grocer. Here then I came to lodge. His project of publishing between us a periodical review was not so good a thing as he expected; we had neither gall nor venom: and as this review was neither a faithless unjust criticism on good works, nor a bitter biting satire on good authors, it had but little sale. However, by means of these little profits, and the academical prize which I had the good fortune to obtain, we went on till autumn, I ruminating tragic verses, and he meditating on his intrigues.

He was ugly, bandy-legged, and advanced in years, yet he was the favored lover of a young Artésienne, of whom he

talked to me every day with the most tender regret; for he suffered the torment of absence, and I was the echo that answered to his sighs. Although much younger than he, I had other cares in my head. The keenest of my sorrows was the repugnance the cook had already shown to trust us. The baker and the green-grocer consented to furnish us still, the one with bread, and the other with cheese: and these were our suppers. But from day to day we ran the risk of being without a dinner. I had one hope left me. Voltaire, who suspected that I was more proud than opulent, had desired that the little poem crowned by the academy might be printed for my benefit, and he had engaged a bookseller to reckon with me for it after deducting the expense of printing. But, whether it be that the bookseller had gained but little by it, or that he loved his own profit better than mine, he said that I had nothing to receive, and that at least half the edition was still left. "Well," said Voltaire, "give me what you have left, I'll dispose of it." He left Paris for Fontainebleau, where the court then was; and there, as the subject proposed by the academy was a panegyric on the king, Voltaire took upon himself to distribute this panegyric, appreciating the author's benefit at his will. It was on this sale that I depended, though not to any great amount.

Voltaire, on his return from Fontainebleau a few days afterwards, filled my hat with crowns, saying that they were the produce of the sale of my poem. Although in my distress I should have been pardonable had I accepted aid, yet I took the liberty of representing to him that he had sold my little work too much above its value. But he made me understand that those who had so nobly paid were persons from whom neither he nor I could refuse anything. Some of Voltaire's enemies wanted to persuade me that this incident ought to separate us. I was not of that opinion; and with these crowns, which it would have been more unbecoming to refuse than to accept, I went and paid all my debts.

My tragedy was finished. It was time to submit it to the correction of Voltaire; but Voltaire was at Cirey. The wisest plan would have been to wait his return to Paris, and I felt it strongly. What advantage should I not have reaped from

the observations, the criticism, the counsel of such a master! But, the more the work would have been improved by his review, the less would it have been my work. Perhaps, too, by requiring more of me than my abilities could effect, he might have discouraged me. These reflections induced me to form my determination, and I went and asked the players to hear my piece read.

This reading was listened to with much kindness. The first three acts and the fifth were fully approved. But they did not hesitate to decide that the fourth was too feeble. I had at first conceived an idea for this fourth act, which afterwards appeared to me too hazardous, and which I had given up. I discovered at this moment that, in wishing to be prudent, I had become cold, and found my boldness return. I requested three days to correct my error, and a second hearing for the fourth day. I slept little in the interval; but I was well paid for this long watching by the success that my new act obtained at the reading, and by the opinion that this prompt and happy composition gave of my talents. It was then that the vexations of an author began; and the first arose from the distribution of the parts.

When the performers had granted me a free admission to the theater, Mademoiselle Gaussin had been the most eager to solicit in my favor. It was she who played the parts of princesses: she excelled particularly in all tender parts, and such as required only the simple expression of love and grief. Beautiful, and of the most touching kind of beauty, with a tone of voice that went to the heart, and a look that when in tears had an inexpressible charm, her simplicity, when well placed, defied criticism; and this verse, which Orosmane addresses to Zaïre,

"Art is not made for thee, thou need'st it not,"

had been inspired by her. Hence it may be well conceived how dear she was to the public, and how secure of favor. But in characters where majesty, force, and tragic passion were requisite, her powers were too feeble; and that voluptuous softness, which accorded so well with tender parts, was quite contrary to the vigor which that of my heroine demanded. Yet Mademoiselle Gaussin had not dissembled her desire to

play the part, which she expressed in the most flattering and seducing manner, by affecting, at the two readings, a very lively interest both for the piece and for its author.

At that time new tragedies were rare, and still more rare were the parts that were favorable to the success of the performer; but the most interesting motive with her was that of taking this part from an actress who every day stole one from her. Never did the jealousy of talent inspire more hatred than the beautiful Gaussin bore the young Clairon. The latter had not the same charm in her face; but in her the features, the voice, the look, the action, and above all the dignity, the energy of character, all accorded to express violent passion and elevated sentiment. Since she had taken possession of the parts of Camille, Didon, Ariane, Roxane, Hermione, and Alzire, it had become necessary to resign them to her. Her acting was not so accurate nor so sage as it afterward became: but it had already all the sap and vigor of great talent. In a character of force, dignity, and enthusiasm, such as that of Arétie, I could not hesitate between her and her rival; and, in spite of my repugnance to disoblige the one, I determined to offer it to the other. The indignation of Mademoiselle Gaussin could not contain itself. She said that it was very well known by what species of fascination Mademoiselle Clairon had won this preference. She certainly was very wrong. But Mademoiselle Clairon became angry in her turn, and obliged me to follow her into the box of her rival; and there, without having told me what she was going to do: "Here, mademoiselle," said she, "I bring him to you, and to let you see whether I have seduced him, whether I have even solicited the preference he has given me, I declare to you, and I declare to him, that, if I accept the part, it shall only be from your hand." With these words she threw the manuscript on the toilet-table in the box, and left me there.

I was then twenty-four, and I found myself *tête-à-tête* with the most beautiful woman in the world. Her trembling hands clasped mine, and I may say that her fine eyes were fixed like suppliants on mine. "What then have I done to you," said she, with her gentle voice, "to deserve the humiliation and the grief you cause me? When M. de Voltaire re-

quested for you a free admission to this theater, it was I who spoke for you. When you read your tragedy, no one was more alive to its beauties than I. I listened attentively to the part of Arétie; and I was too much affected by it not to flatter myself that I should play it as I felt it. Why then deprive me of it? it belongs to me by the right of seniority, and perhaps by some other title. You do me an injury by giving it to any other; and I doubt whether you benefit yourself. Believe me, it is not the noise of labored declamation that suits this character. Reflect well on it. My own success is dear to me, but yours is not less so, and it would be a grateful pleasure to me to have contributed to it."

I confess that the effort I made over myself was painful. My eyes, my ears, my heart, were exposed without defense to the gentlest of enchantments. Charmed by all my senses, moved to the bottom of my heart, I was in immediate danger of falling at the knees of her who seemed disposed to receive me kindly. But the fate of my work depended on it, my only hope, and the well-being of my poor children: and the alternative of failure or complete success was so vividly present to my mind, that this interest prevailed over all the emotions with which I was agitated.

"Mademoiselle," said I, "were I so happy as to have written such a part as that of Andromaque, Iphigenie, Zaïre, or Inis, I should be at your feet to pray you to give it still greater effect. No one feels better than I the charm that you add to the expression of touching sorrow or of timid and tender love. But, unfortunately, the fable of my play is not suited to such a character; and, though the powers that this requires are less rare, less precious than the engaging simplicity which you possess, you will yourself allow that they are quite different: I shall one day perhaps have an occasion to employ with advantage the gentle accents of your voice, those enchanting looks, those eloquent tears, that divine beauty, in a part that is worthy of you. Leave the perils and risks of my first effort to her who is willing to run them; and, by reserving to yourself the honor of having resigned the character to her, avoid the dangers, which, in playing it, you would yourself share with me." "You have said enough," said she, disguising her displeasure. "It is you

who request it; I give up the part." Then, taking the manuscript from her toilet-table, she went down with me, and, finding Mademoiselle Clairon in the green-room, "I restore to you," said she, with an ironical smile, "and I restore to you without regret, the part from which you expect such success and glory. I am of your opinion, that it suits you better than me." Mademoiselle Clairon received it with modest dignity; and I in silence, without daring to look up, waited the close of the scene. But in the evening, at supper, *tête-à-tête* with my actress, I breathed free from the embarrassment into which she had plunged me. She was not a little sensible of the constancy with which I had sustained this trial; and it was this incident that gave birth to that lasting friendship which has grown old with us.

BOOK IV

ANOTHER society into which I was introduced, I do not recollect how, was that of the Baron d'Holbach. It was there I first knew Diderot, Helvétius, Grimm, and J. J. Rousseau, before he had become a savage. Grimm, then the secretary and intimate friend of the young Count de Frise, the nephew of Marshal Saxe, used to give us a dinner every week at his own house; and at this bachelor's dinner reigned a frank liberty; but that was a dish of which Rousseau tasted but very temperately. No one ever observed more strictly than he the melancholy maxim of living with his friends as if they were one day to be his enemies. When I first knew him, he had just borne the prize of eloquence at the academy of Dijon, with that fine sophism in which he has imputed to the arts and sciences the natural effects of the prosperity and wealth of nations. Yet he had not then declared himself as he has since done, nor did he announce any ambition to form a sect. Either his pride was unborn, or he concealed it under the show of a timid politeness, that was sometimes even obsequious, and bordered on humility. But in this timid reserve distrust was evidently visible; his eyes observed everything with a suspicious attention. He was very rarely affable, and never open-hearted. He was not the less amicably received; as we knew he indulged a restless self-love, tetchy, easily hurt, he was humored, and treated with the same at-

tention and delicacy that we should use toward a beautiful woman, very vain and very capricious, whose favors we wished to obtain. He was then composing the music for the "Devin du Village," and sung to us at the harpsichord the airs he had written. We were charmed with them; we were not less so with the firm, animated, and profound manner in which his first essay on eloquence was written. Nothing could be more sincere, I ought to say it, than our benevolence for his person, nor than our esteem for his talents. It is the recollection of these days that made me indignant against him, when I saw him, for foolish trifles, or wrongs of his own creating, calumniate men who treated him so kindly, and would have been so happy to love him. I have lived with them all their lives; I shall have occasion to speak of their minds and hearts. I never perceived in them anything like the character that his evil genius attributed to them.

As for me, the little time that we were together in their society passed, between him and me, coldly, without affection and without aversion for each other; the way in which we treated each other admitted neither of complaint nor praise: and, in what I have said, and in what I may still say of him, I feel myself perfectly free from all personality.

But the fruit I gathered from his society and example was a return of reflection on the imprudence of my youth. "There," said I, "is a man who has given himself time to think before he wrote; and I, in the most difficult and most perilous of arts, have hastened to write almost before I had thought. Twenty years of study and meditation, in silence and retreat, have amassed, ripened, and fertilized his knowledge; and I scatter my ideas when they are scarcely blown, and before they have acquired their vigor and growth. Thus in his first productions there is an astonishing abundance, a perfect virility; and in mine all savors of the greenness and feebleness of a talent that study and reflection have not sufficiently nurtured." My only excuse was my poverty, and the necessity of laboring incessantly and hastily to procure my subsistence. I resolved to extricate myself from this sad situation, were I even obliged to renounce poetry.

I had some access to the court, and the removal of M. Orri had not taken from me all hope of fortune. The same

woman, by whose influence he had been dismissed, was pleased with me for having more than once been the echo of the public voice, in verses where I celebrated what was worthy of praise in the reign of her lover. A little poem that I had written on the establishment of the military school, a monument raised to the glory of the king by the bosom friends of Madame de Pompadour,—this little poem, I say, had interested her and installed me in her favor. The Abbé de Bernis and Duclos went together to see her every Sunday, and, as they had both some friendship for me, I used to go with them as a third. This woman, to whom the first nobility of the kingdom and the princes of the blood themselves paid their court at her toilet, though simple by birth, she who had the weakness to be ambitious of pleasing the king and the misfortune to succeed, became, in her elevation, the best woman in the world. She received us all three familiarly, although with evident shades of distinction.

I consented, from complaisance to her, to exert myself on a new subject. But I chose one that was too simple, and too much above my powers.

The players, as well as Madame de Pompadour, were seduced at the reading of my piece by the beautiful morality with which I had decorated the last acts. But on the stage their feebleness was manifest, and it was the more sensibly felt because I had written the first with more vehemence and warmth. My combat of generosity and virtue had nothing tragic. The public were weary at not being moved, and my piece fell. For this time, I was convinced the public were right.

I returned home, determined to write no more for the stage; and I wrote instantly by an express to Madame de Pompadour, who was at Bellevue, to inform her of my misfortune, and very urgently to renew the prayer I had made her to obtain for me some employment in which I might be more useful than in an art for which I was not born.

She was at table with the king when she received my letter, and the king having permitted her to read it, "The new piece is fallen," said she; "and do you know, Sire, who it is that tells me so? The author himself. Unhappy young man! I would willingly have at this moment some place to

offer him that might give him consolation." Her brother, the Marquis de Marigny, who was at this supper, said to her that he had a place of *secrétaire des bâtimens* which he would give me, if she chose. "Ah!" said she, "write to him then to-morrow, I entreat you." And the king appeared satisfied that they should afford me this consolation.

The letter in which M. de Marigny offered me, in the most engaging and obliging manner, a place of little value, as he said, but tranquil, and which would leave me leisure for my devotion to the muses, caused me an emotion of joy and gratitude which I warmly expressed in my reply. I thought myself safe in port, after having been cast away, and blessed the hospitable earth that insured me gentle repose.

Voltaire was then absent from Paris; he was in Prussia. The thread of my narrative has appeared to separate me from my connection with him; but till his departure it had remained the same, and the vexations he experienced seemed to have tightened the bond of our friendship. Of these vexations, the most severe for the moment was that of the death of the Marchioness du Châtelet. But, to be sincere, I recognized on this occasion, as I often had done, the mobility of his soul. When I went to express to him the part I took in his affliction, "Come," said he on seeing me; "come and share my sorrow. I have lost my illustrious friend; I am in despair, I am inconsolable." I, to whom he had often said that she was like a fury that haunted his steps, and who knew that in their disputes they had more than once been at daggers-drawn, let him weep, and seemed to sympathize with him; and thus he continued to exhaust language in praise of that incomparable woman, redoubling his tears and sobs. At this moment arrives the intendant Chauvelin, who tells him some ridiculous story, and at once Voltaire is bursting with laughter. I laughed too, as I went away, to see in this great man the facility of a child, in passing from one extreme to another in the passions that agitated him. One only was fixed in him, and, as it were, inherent in his soul; it was an ardent love of fame, and of all that flatters and feeds this passion nothing to him was indifferent.

It was not enough for him to be the most illustrious of men of letters; he wanted to be a courtier. From his earliest youth

he had assumed the seductive habit of living with the great. He had bought a place of gentleman in ordinary of the king's chamber; this place, commonly very inactive, gave, however, the right of being sent to foreign courts on light commissions, and he had flattered himself that for a man like him these commissions would not be limited to bare compliments of felicitation and condolence. He wanted, as we say, to make his way at court; and, when he had a project in his head, he persisted in it obstinately. One of his maxims was these words of the Evangelist: "Regnum cœlorum vim patitur et violenti rapiunt illud"; he employed, then, all the means he could devise to approach the king.

When Madame d'Etioles, afterward Marchioness de Pompadour, was announced as the king's favorite, and even before she was declared so, he was eager in paying his court to her. He easily succeeded in pleasing her; and, while he celebrated the victories of the king, he flattered her by writing pretty verses to her. He was persuaded that, through her, he should obtain the favor of being admitted to the little cabinet suppers, and I am persuaded this was her wish.

But the king, little touched with the praises he had lavished on him in his panegyric, only saw in him an impious philosopher and an ambitious flatterer. He had at last consented, with great difficulty, that he should be received at the Academy. Without reckoning the friends of religion, who were not the friends of Voltaire, there were many about the king who were envious of the favor they saw him courting, and careful to censure what he did to please. In their mind, the poem of Fontenoy was only a cold gazette; the panegyric on the king was inanimate, defective in coloring, and without eloquence.

At the marriage of the dauphin with the infanta of Spain, it was easy to animadvert on the absurdity and folly of having given, as a play to the infanta, that "Princesse de Navarre," which really was not calculated to succeed. I do not say the same of the opera of "Le Temple de la Gloire"; the idea of it was grand, the subject well conceived and nobly executed. The third act, of which Trajan was the hero, presented an allusion flattering to the king; it was a hero, just, humane, generous, pacific, and worthy the love of the world, to whom the temple of glory was open. Voltaire doubted not but that the

king would recognize his eulogy. After the play he met him in his way out, and seeing that the king passed without saying anything to him, he took the liberty of asking him, "Is Trajan satisfied?" Trajan, surprised and displeased that he should have dared to interrogate him, answered by a cold silence; and the whole court thought Voltaire very wrong for having dared to question the king.

As I was in his secret with respect to the King of Prussia, and as I imagined I well understood that king, and the little sincerity there was in his caresses, I had some presentiment of the dissatisfaction they would both have on seeing each other near. A soul so imperious and a mind so ardent could scarcely be compatible; and I hoped to see Voltaire soon return more discontented with Germany than he was with his own country. But the new vexation he experienced, on going to take leave of the king, and the anger he expressed at it, no longer left me that consoling hope. As gentleman in ordinary of the king's chamber, he thought he might venture to ask his orders for the King of Prussia; but the king, instead of answering, abruptly turned his back on him; and he in indignation, as soon as he was out of the kingdom, sent him back his warrant of historiographer of France, and accepted, without his consent, the cross of the Order of Merit, which the King of Prussia bestowed, though to despoil him of it a short time afterwards.

The example of so many crosses and vexations in the life of this great man did but exhibit a more fearful picture of the life of a man of letters, and reconciled me to the mild though obscure repose I was going to enjoy at Versailles.

Here, thank Heaven! finish the errors of my youth; here I begin a course of life less dissipated, less irregular, more prudent, and, above all, less exposed to the tempest of the passions; here, in short, my character, too long mobile and unsteady, takes a little consistency, and my reason, on a solid base, becomes able to exert itself and regulate my morals.

BOOK V

I HAVE scarcely known a happier part of my life than the five years I passed at Versailles. Versailles was to me divided into two regions. One was that of intrigue, of ambi-

tion, of envy, and of all the passions that servile interest and necessitous luxury engender: I scarcely ever went there. The other was the abode of labor, of silence, of repose, and, after labor, of joy in the bosom of that repose; and there it was I passed my life. Free from inquietude, almost wholly to myself, having little more than two days in the week to give to the light employment of my place, I had created an occupation for myself that was no less pleasing than interesting: it was a course of study in which methodically, with my pen in my hand, I surveyed the principal branches of ancient and modern literature, comparing them with each other, without partiality, without respect to persons, like an independent man, who should be of no country and of no age. It was in this spirit that, reading and collecting the traits that struck me and the reflections that example suggested to me, I formed that mass of materials which I first employed in my labors for the "Encyclopædia," from which I afterward drew my "Art of French Poetry," and which I have since amalgamated with my "Elements of Literature." In this employment there was no restraint; no anxiety about the opinion and judgment of the vulgar. I studied for myself: I noted down my thoughts and sentiments like a man under no shackles; and this course of reading and meditation had the more charm for me, because I thought I discovered, between the objects of the art and its means, between its march and that of nature, relations that might serve to fix the rules of taste. I had few books of my own, but I was abundantly furnished from the royal library. I used to make a good provision of them for the journeys of the court; for in these journeys I went in the suite of M. de Marigny: and the woods of Marly, with the forests of Compiègne and Fontainebleau, formed the secret shades in which I studied.

The court was at Fontainebleau, and there I used often to go and pass an hour in the evening with Quesnai. One evening when I was with him, Madame de Pompadour sent for me and said, "Do you know that La Bruyère is dead? He died at Rome. It was he who held the patent of the Mercury: this patent was worth a thousand a year to him; there is enough to make more than one happy man; and we intend to add to the new patent of the Mercury a few pensions for

men of letters. You who know them name to me those who would want such pensions, and would be well calculated to receive them." I named Crébillon, D'Alembert, Boissy, and some others. As for Crébillon, I knew it was unnecessary to recommend him; as for D'Alembert, perceiving she made a little sign of disapprobation, "He is," said I, "madame, a geometrician of the first order, a most distinguished writer, and a perfectly honest man." "Yes," replied she, "but a little hot-headed." I answered very mildly that without some warmth in the head there was no great talent. "He indulges a passion," said she, "for Italian music, and has put himself at the head of a party of the Buffons." "It is not the less true," answered I, modestly, "that he has written the preface of the Encyclopædia." She said no more; but he had no pension. I believe that a graver subject of exclusion was his zeal for the King of Prussia, of whom he was the declared partisan, and whom Madame de Pompadour personally hated. When we came to Boissy, she asked me, "Is not Boissy rich? I thought him at least in easy circumstances: I have seen him at the theater, and always quite well dressed!" "No, madame, he is poor, but he conceals his poverty." "He has written so many theatrical pieces," insisted she. "Yes, but all these pieces had not the same success; and he had himself to maintain. In short, madame,—shall I say it?—Boissy is so far from rich that, had not a friend discovered his situation, he would last winter have perished for want. Without bread, and too proud to ask it of any one, he had shut himself up with his wife and son, resolved to die together; and they were going to kill themselves in each other's arms, when this helping friend forced the door and saved them." "Ah, God!" cried Madame de Pompadour, "you make me shudder. I'll go and recommend him to the king."

The next morning I saw Boissy enter my room, pale, wild, disordered, with an emotion that resembled joy upon the face of grief. His first impulse was to fall at my feet. I, who thought he fainted, hastened eagerly to aid him, and, raising him up, asked him what could put him in such a state. "Ah! sir," said he, "don't you know? You, my generous benefactor, you who have saved my life, you who, from an

abyss of misery, have raised me to a situation of comfort and unexpected fortune! I came to solicit a moderate pension on the Mercury; and M. de Saint-Florentin announced to me that it is the privilege, the patent itself, of the Mercury which the king has just granted me. He informs me that I owe it to Madame de Pompadour; I go to return her my thanks; and then M. Quesnai tells me that it is you who, as you spoke of me, so touched Madame de Pompadour that she had tears in her eyes."

I endeavored to interrupt him by embracing him; but he continued, "What then have I done, sir, to merit from you so tender an interest? I have scarcely seen you; you hardly know me; and in speaking of me you have the eloquence of sentiment, the ardor of friendship!" At these words he would have kissed my hand. "This is too much," said I; "it becomes me, sir, to moderate this excess of gratitude; and when your heart shall be more at ease, I will explain myself in turn. I certainly wished to serve you; but in that I have been but just; and without it I should have abused the confidence with which Madame de Pompadour honored me by consulting me. Her sensibility and goodness have done the rest. Suffer me to rejoice with you at the smiles of fortune; and let us both return thanks to her to whom you are indebted."

As soon as Boissy had taken leave of me I went to the minister's; and perceiving that he received me as if he had nothing to say to me, I first asked if I had not something to thank him for? He answered no. If the pensions on the Mercury were disposed of? Yes, they were. If Madame de Pompadour had not mentioned me? He assured me she had not said a word about me, and that, if she had named me, he would willingly have put me on the list which he had presented to the king. I was confounded, I confess; for though I had not named myself when she consulted me, I thought myself very sure of being of the number of the persons she meant to propose. I went to her house; and very fortunately I found in her drawing-room Madame de Marchais, to whom I related circumstantially my mischance. "And this really astonishes you?" said she; "for my part I am not at all surprised; it is her very self. She has forgotten you." At

the same instant she runs to the dressing-room where Madame de Pompadour was, and immediately after I heard bursts of laughter. I thought this a happy presage; and indeed, Madame de Pompadour, on her way to mass, could not look on me without laughing again at her palpable forgetfulness. "I divined it exactly," said Madame de Marchais, on seeing me again; "but it shall all be repaired." I had but a pension of fifty pounds on the Mercury, and I was happy.

M. de Boissy, as editor of the work, did not sufficiently exert himself. It soon became necessary to give him support; and for this purpose he had neither the connections, the resources, nor the activity of the Abbé Raynal, who, in the absence of La Bruyère, conducted it, and conducted it well.

Destitute of assistance, finding nothing passable in the papers that were left him, Boissy wrote me a letter which was a true picture of distress. "You will in vain have given me the Mercury," said he; "this favor will be lost on me if you do not add that of coming to my aid. Prose or verse, whatever you please, all will be good from your hand. But hasten to extricate me from the difficulty in which I now am; I conjure you in the name of that friendship which I have vowed to you for the rest of my life."

This letter roused me from my lethargy; I beheld this unhappy editor a prey to ridicule, and the Mercury decried in his hands, should he let his penury be seen. It put me in a fever for the whole night; and it was in this state of crisis and agitation that I first conceived the idea of writing a tale. After having passed the night without closing my eyes, rolling in my fancy the subject of that I have entitled "Alcibiade," I got up, wrote it at a breath without laying down my pen, and sent it off. This tale had an unexpected success. I had required that the name of its author should be kept secret. No one knew to whom to attribute it; and at the dinner of Helvétius, where the best connoisseurs were assembled, they did me the honor of ascribing it to Voltaire or to Montesquieu.

Boissy, overjoyed at the increase which this novelty had given to the sale of the Mercury, redoubled his prayers to obtain some more pieces of the same kind. I wrote the tale of "Soliman II." for him, then that of "Le Scrupule," and

some others. Such was the origin of those moral tales which have since obtained so much repute in Europe. In this instance Boissy did me more benefit than I did him. But he did not long enjoy his good fortune; and at his death, when it became necessary to appoint his successor, "Sire," said Madame de Pompadour to the king, "will you not give the Mercury to him who has supported it?" The patent was granted me. I was then obliged to resolve to quit Versailles.

I asked M. de Marigny if he thought my place of secretary compatible with the patent and management of the Mercury. He answered that he thought it impossible to attend to both. "Then give me my discharge," said I; "for I have not the courage to discharge myself." He gave it me; and Madame Geoffrin offered me a lodging in her house. I accepted it with gratitude, but praying her to have the kindness to permit me to pay rent; a condition to which I brought her to consent.

Behold me once again pushed back into that Paris from which I had been so delighted to remove! Behold me more dependent than ever on that public, from whom I thought myself disengaged for life! What then were become of my resolutions? Two sisters in a convent, of an age to be married; the excessive indulgence of an old aunt in giving credit to all comers, and ruining the trade by contracting debts that I was every year obliged to pay; my future comfort, to which I was obliged to look forward, having as yet only reserved four hundred guineas, which I had employed in giving security for M. Odde; the French Academy, at which I could only arrive by the career of letters; lastly, the charm of that literary and philosophic society which recalled me to its bosom,—were the cause, and must be the excuse, of that inconstancy that induced me to renounce repose, so gentle and delicious, in order to go and be the editor of a journal at Paris; that is, to condemn myself to the labor of Sisyphus or to that of the Danaïdes.

BOOK VI

If the Mercury had been only a simple literary journal, I should have had, in composing it, but one endeavor to fulfill and but one route to pursue. But formed of different ele-

ments, and calculated to embrace a vast variety of objects, it was necessary that in all its relations it should fulfill its functions; that, according to the various tastes of the subscribers, it should supply the place of newspapers to the lovers of news; that it should render an account of the theaters to those who took pleasure in the drama; that it should give a just idea of literary productions to those who, select in their reading, wished to be instructed or amused; that to the sane and prudent part of the public, who delight in the progress and discoveries of the useful and salutary arts, it should communicate their attempts at improvement, and the happy inventions of the time; that to the lovers of the fine arts it should announce new productions, and sometimes the writings of authors. The popular parts of science, which might present objects of curiosity to the public, were also a part of its domain. But, above all, it was requisite that it should have a local and social interest for the provincial subscribers, and that the poetic talent of this or that city of the kingdom should there find inserted, from time to time, its enigma, its madrigal, or its epistle;—this part of the Mercury, in appearance the most frivolous, was the most lucrative.

It would have been difficult to imagine a periodical work more diversified, more attractive, and more abundant in resources.

I had formed a correspondence with all the academies of the kingdom, as well for the arts as for letters; and, without reckoning their productions which they were pleased to send me, the bare subjects for their prizes were interesting to read, on account of the sagacious and profound views announced by the questions they proposed for solution, whether in morality, in political economy, or in the useful, domestic, and salutary arts. I myself was sometimes astonished at the luminous extent of these questions, that were sent us from every side and from the remotest corners of the provinces. Nothing, in my opinion, better marked the direction, the tendency, and the progress of the public mind.

Thus, without ceasing to be amusing and frivolous in its light part, the Mercury did not fail by its utility to acquire consistence and weight. On my part, contributing all in my

power to render it at once agreeable and useful, I often added to it one of those tales, in which I always endeavored to mix some portion of interesting morality. The Apology for the Theater, which I wrote in answer to Rousseau's letter to D'Alembert on the stage, had all the success that truth could have when it was engaged with sophistry, and reason when, hand to hand and in close contest, it combats eloquence.

But as we should never be either so proud or forgetful as to be guilty of ingratitude, I will honestly tell you what was occasionally one of my resources. At Paris the republic of letters was divided into several classes, that had little or no communication with each other. I neglected none of them; and the little verses that were made in inferior societies, all that had grace or nature, were dear to me. At a jeweler's in the Place Dauphine I had often dined with two poets of the old Opera Comique, whose genius was gayety, and whose poetic fire never was so vivid as under the vine-arbor of a tavern. To them the happiest of all states was intoxication; but, before they were too far gone, they used to have moments of inspiration that seemed to confirm what Horace has said of wine. One of them, whose name was Galet, passed for an idle rake. I never saw him but when at table, and I mention him only as the friend of Panard, who was a good man, and whom I loved.

This idle rake, however, was an original whose singularity may occupy a moment. He was a grocer in Lombard Street, who, more attentive to the theater of "La Foire" than to his shop, had ruined himself before I knew him. He was in a dropsy, and did not drink the less, nor was he the less jovial: he was equally indifferent about death or life; and in penury, in captivity, on the bed of sickness, and almost in the agonies of death, his gayety did not forsake him; to him these things were sport.

After his bankruptcy he fled to the Temple, then the asylum for insolvent debtors: and as he every day received bills from his creditors, "Here I am," said he, "lodged in the Temple, where bills are booked." When his dropsy was on the point of suffocating him, the vicar of the Temple came to administer the extreme unction. "Ah! Mr. Abbé," said he, "what! you come to clean my boots? You need not have

troubled yourself, for I am going by water." The same day he wrote to his friend Collé; and wishing him a happy new year in some couplets to the air of *Accompagné de plusieurs autres,* he thus terminated his merry career:—

"Receive, dearest Collé, my farewell in rhyme,
I'm just setting off to go home;
It should be much longer, if I had more time,
But the grave-digger waits till I come."

The good Panard, as heedless as his friend, as forgetful of the past and as negligent of the future, had, in his misfortunes, rather the tranquillity of a child than the indifference of a philosopher. The care of feeding, lodging, and clothing himself did not give him any concern. They were the business of his friends: and he had some so kind as to merit this confidence. In his manners, as in his mind, he had a great deal of the simple and unaffected nature of La Fontaine. No exterior ever announced less delicacy; yet it was inherent in his fancy and in his language. More than once at table, when rosy with the vapors of wine, I have heard issue from that heavy mass, and that thick covering, impromptu couplets full of ease, grace, and delicacy. For this reason, when, compiling the Mercury of the month, I wanted some pretty verses, I used to go and see my friend Panard. "Rummage the litter in my wig-box," he used to say. This box was indeed a true litter, in which the verses of this amiable poet, scrawled on dirty strips of paper, lay heaped in confusion. Seeing almost all his manuscripts spotted with wine, I reproached him with it. "O, take those, take those," cried he; "they have the seal of genius." He had so tender an affection for wine, that he always spoke of it as of the friend of his heart; and with the glass in his hand, looking at the object of his worship and delight, he would suffer himself to be so moved by it that the tears would start into his eyes.

In the society of Madame Filleul I again saw Cury; he was in misfortune, and I loved him the more tenderly. I have already said that in the time of his prosperity he had shown me much kindness.

A little gayety, in which he had permitted himself to in-

dulge at the theater at Fontainebleau in a prologue of his own, by turning into ridicule the gentlemen of the king's chamber, had alienated them from him; and after they had pretended to laugh at his pleasantry they revenged themselves by compelling him to quit his place of intendant of the *Menus Plaisirs*. The most stupid of these gentlemen, the most vain and the most choleric, was the Duke d'Aumont. He was obstinately bent on Cury's ruin; he was its principal cause, and he gloried in it. This alone made me conceive an aversion to this little duke.

One morning I learnt that Cury was attacked with a cruel fit of the gout. I instantly went down to him. I found him by his fireside with both his legs wrapped up in flannels, but writing on his knee, and laughing with the air of a satyr, for he had all the features of one. I would have spoken to him about his fit of the gout, but he made me a sign not to interrupt him, and with a crooked hand he finished what he was writing. "You have suffered very much," said I, then; "but I see that the pain is abated." "I suffer still," answered he; "but I do not laugh the less. You shall laugh too. You know with what fury the Duke d'Aumont has pursued me? I think it not too much to revenge myself by a little malice; and here is what I have been ruminating on the whole night, in spite of the gout."

He had already written some thirty verses of the famous parody of "Cinna"; he read them to me, and I confess that, having found them very comic, I engaged him to continue. "Then let me write," said he; "for I am in the humor for it." I left him; and when, on hearing the bell, I descended to dinner, I found him, who had himself hobbled down, muffled up in his fur, and who, before the company assembled, was reading to Laferté and Rosetti what he had read in the morning to me, and some more verses that he had added. At this second reading I easily retained these mischievous verses from one end to the other, aided by the verses of Corneille, of which these were the parody, and which I knew by heart. The next day Cury went on with his work, and I was always his confidant; so that on my return to Paris I carried away about fifty of these lines that my memory was able to retain.

My head full of the parody that had just been confided to me, I arrived at Paris at Madame Geoffrin's, and the next day I there heard this curious piece mentioned. The first two verses only were quoted:

"Let each then retire, and none enter: do you,
Le Kain, stay with me, and you, D'Argental, too."

But this was enough to persuade me that it was already current in society, and I happened to say, smiling, "What! do you know no more than that?" They instantly pressed me to tell what I knew of it. There were none present, they said, but confidential friends; and Madame Geoffrin herself answered for the discretion of her little circle. I yielded; I recited to them what I knew of the parody; and the next day I was denounced to the Duke d'Aumont, and by him to the king, as the author of this satire.

I instantly returned home and wrote to the Duke d'Aumont to assure him that the verses that were attributed to me were not mine; and that, never having written a satire against any one, I certainly should not have begun with him. I should have stopped there. But, in writing, I recollected that on the subject of "Venceslaus," and the falsehoods that were published against me, the Duke d'Aumont had himself written to me to say that I ought to despise such trifles, and that they would die of themselves if they were not kept alive by controversy. I thought it natural and just to return him his maxim, in which I was very foolish; and thus my letter was taken for a fresh insult, and the Duke d'Aumont produced it to the king as a proof of the resentment that had dictated the satire. Did I not accuse myself by ridiculing him while I disavowed it? My letter then did but inflame his anger and that of the whole court. I did not fail to go immediately to Versailles, and on arriving there I wrote to the Duke de Choiseul.

"My Lord Duke:

"I am told that you lend your ear to the voice that accuses me, and that solicits my ruin. You are powerful, but you are just; I am unfortunate, but I am innocent. I entreat you to hear me and to judge. I am, etc."

The Duke de Choiseul wrote, for answer, at the bottom of my letter, "In half an hour," and sent it back to me. In half an hour I went to his hotel and was introduced.

"You are desirous that I should hear you," said he; "I am willing to do so. What have you to say?" "That I have done nothing to merit the severe reception I experience from your grace, who has a soul so noble and so generous, and who never took pleasure in humbling the unfortunate." "But, Marmontel, how do you expect I should receive you after the infamous satire that you have just written against the Duke d'Aumont?" "I never wrote that satire; I have told him so himself." "Yes; and in your letter you have added a fresh insult, by offering him, in his own words, the counsel he had given you." "As that counsel was wise, I thought I might be allowed to recall it to his memory; I intended by it no insult." "Yet it is nevertheless an impertinence, permit me to tell you so." "I felt it so, too, after my letter was gone." "He is very much offended at it, and with reason." "Yes, to this I plead guilty, and I reproach myself with it as a total neglect of decorum. But would this neglect be a crime in the eyes of your grace?" "No; but the parody?" "The parody is not mine; I declare it to you as an honest man." "Is it not you who have recited it?" "Yes, what I knew of it, in a society where each tells all he knows; but I would not permit my hearers to take a copy, although they were very desirous." "Yet it is current." "Then those who give it currency have it from some other person." "And who gave you a copy?" I was silent. "You," added he, "are said to have been the first who recited it, and recited it in such a way as to discover you were its author." "When I told what I knew of it," answered I, "it was really the subject of conversation, and the first verses were quoted. As to the manner in which I recited, it would prove just as well that I wrote the 'Misantrope,' the 'Tartuffe,' and 'Cinna' itself; for I boast, my lord, of reading each of those pieces as if I were its author." "But, to be short, from whom did you hear this parody? This is what you should tell." "Pardon me, my lord, that is exactly what I should not tell and what I shall not tell." "I would wager it was from the author." "Well, my lord, if it were from the author,

ought I to name him?" "And how, without that, will you persuade the world that it is not yours? You had been irritated against the Duke d'Aumont; the cause of it is known; you have sought to revenge yourself. You have written this satire, and finding it comic, you have recited it: this is what the world says, this is what the world believes, and this is what the world has a right to believe. What do you answer to this?" "I answer that such conduct would be that of a madman, a fool, a wretched idiot, and that the author of the parody is far from either of these characters. What! my lord, would the man that wrote it have had the simplicity, the imprudence, the extravagance, of going to recite it himself, without mystery, in society? No; disguising his handwriting, he would have made a dozen copies of it, which he would have addressed to the players, and to the other malcontents about the court. I know, as well as another, these means of concealment; and, had I been culpable, should have adopted them. Be pleased, then, to say to yourself: 'Marmontel, before six persons who were not his intimate friends, had recited what he knew of this parody; therefore he is not its author. His letter to the Duke d'Aumont is the letter of a man who fears nothing; he therefore felt himself strong in his innocence, and had thought he had nothing to apprehend.' This reasoning, my lord, is the reverse of that which is opposed to me, but it is no less conclusive. I have committed two imprudent mistakes; one is, that of reciting verses that my memory had caught, and having given them publicity without the author's consent." "Then you really had them from the author?" "Yes, from the author himself; for I will not tell you a falsehood. It is to him, then, that I am culpable and that is my first fault. The other is, that of having written to the Duke d'Aumont in a tone that seemed like irony, and was not sufficiently respectful. These are my two faults; I confess them; but I have no others." "I believe you," said he; "you speak like an honest man. Yet you are to be sent to the Bastile. Call on M. de St. Florentin; he has received the order from the king." "I will go to him," said I; "but may I flatter myself that you will no longer be among the number of my enemies?" He promised it me with a good grace, and I went to the

office of the minister, who was to expedite my *lettre de cachet.*

I wanted that evening to prepare the Mercury of the month. I sent then to ask two of my friends to supper; and, waiting their arrival, I went to Madame Geoffrin's to announce my calamity to her. She already knew something of it, for I found her cold and sorrowful. But, although my misfortune had taken its rise in her society, and she herself had been the involuntary cause of it, I did not touch on that point, and by this conduct I believe she was pleased.

The manner in which I was treated at the Bastile made me well conceive that I should not be there long; and my translation, intermixed with interesting reading (for I had with me Montaigne, Horace, and La Bruyère), left me but few weary moments. There was one thing only that sometimes plunged me in melancholy; the walls of my chamber were covered with inscriptions that all bore the character of the sad and somber reflections with which, before me, some unhappy sufferers had doubtless been oppressed in this prison. I used to think I still saw them wandering and lamenting, and their shades encompassing me.

At length, on the eleventh day of my detention, at the close of day, the governor came to announce that my liberty was restored; and the same officer who had conducted me took me back to M. de Sartine's. This minister expressed some joy at seeing me again, but his joy was mixed with sadness. "Sir," said I, "in your kindness, for which I am very grateful, there is something that still afflicts me; while you congratulate me, you have the air of pitying me. Have you some new misfortune to announce to me?" "Alas! yes," answered he; "and do you not suspect it? The king has taken the Mercury from you." These words comforted me, and expressing my resignation by gently inclining my head, "So much the worse for the Mercury," answered I. "The evil," added he, "is perhaps not without remedy. M. de St. Florentin is at Paris: he interests himself for you; go and call on him to-morrow morning."

M. de St. Florentin appeared concerned at my fate. He had done for me all that his weakness and timidity had permitted; but neither Madame de Pompadour nor M. de Choiseul had seconded him. Without explaining himself, he ap-

proved my going to visit both of them, and I hastened to Versailles.

Madame de Pompadour, to whose house I first went, sent me word by Quesnai, that under the present circumstances she could not see me. I was not surprised at it; I had no right to expect that she should make herself powerful enemies for my sake.

Indeed, the obstinate pride of the Duke d'Aumont was relentless. Neither the Count d'Angiviller, his friend, nor Bouvart, his physician, nor the Count of Duras, his comrade, could inspire him with any sentiment that was noble. As he had nothing in himself to command respect, he pretended at least to make himself feared; and he only returned to the court fully determined not to suffer himself to yield, declaring that he should consider those as his enemies who spoke to him of any step in my favor. None dared to oppose one of the men who approached nearest the person of the king; and all the interest they took in me was reduced to the securing me a yearly pension of one hundred and twenty guineas on the Mercury; the Abbé Barthelemi refused the patent of it; and it was granted to one Lagarde, Madame de Pompadour's librarian, the worthy protégé of Colin her steward.

As destitute of information as of talents, this new editor did his work so ill that the Mercury was soon decried, and the affrighted pensioners perceived that it would be incapable of paying the pensions that were charged on it. They came to entreat me to consent to resume it, and offered to go in a body and request that it might be restored to me. But, having once quitted this heavy chain, I would not be loaded with it again. Fortunately, Lagarde dying, the Mercury was conducted a little less ill, and fell more slowly into decay. But it at length became necessary to make it a bookseller's speculation that the pensions might be paid.

BOOK VII

TRANQUIL with regard to fortune, my sole ambition was the French Academy; and this ambition itself was temperate and peaceful. Before I should attain my fortieth year, I had still three years to give to my literary labors; and in

three years I should have acquired new titles to this distinction. My translation of Lucan advanced; at the same time I was preparing materials for my "Art of Poetry," and the celebrity of the Tales perpetually increased with every new edition. I thought the prospect before me mild and delightful.

I learnt that D'Argental and his wife were spreading the report that I was lost in the king's esteem; and that it would be in vain for the Academy to elect me; because his Majesty would not confirm my election. I found my friends struck with this opinion; and, had I been as impatient to be of the Academy as they were to see me there, I should have been very unhappy. But, while assuring them that in spite of intrigue I should obtain this place from which my enemies were so desirous to exclude me, I also declared that my pride would be well satisfied if I deserved it, even without obtaining it. I applied myself then to finish my translation of the "Pharsalia," and my "Poétique Française"; I sent my "Epître aux Poëtes" to the Academy; and as the editions of my Tales succeeded each other, I added new ones.

At length, the printing of my "Poétique" being completed, I entreated Madame de Pompadour to obtain from the king that a work which was wanting in our literature might be presented to him. "It is," added I, "a favor which will cost nothing either to the king or the state, and which will prove that I am well liked and well received by the king." I owe this testimony to the memory of this beneficent woman, that, at this simple and easy method of publicly deciding the king in my favor, her beautiful countenance beamed with joy. "Most willingly," said she, "will I ask for you this favor of the king, and it will be granted." She obtained it without difficulty, and, in announcing it to me, "You must give," said she, "all possible solemnity to this presentation; and on the same day all the royal family and all the ministers must receive your work from your own hand."

I confided my secret only to my most intimate friends; and my copies being very magnificently bound (for I spared no expense in it), I went one Saturday evening to Versailles with my packets. On my arrival I entreated Madame de Pompadour, through Quesnai, to engage the king to receive me kindly.

The next day I was introduced by the Duke de Duras. The king was at his levee. I never saw him so engaging. He received my homage with an enchanting look. I should have been at the summit of joy if he had said one word to me; but his eyes spoke for him.

After this business was over I went quickly to D'Alembert and Duclos, to announce to them the success I had just had; and the next day I made a present of my book to the Academy. I distributed some copies of it to those academicians whose sentiments I knew to be favorable to me. Mairau said that in this work I had laid a mine under the door of the Academy, in order to blow it up if it were shut upon me.

When I had passed this strait, my life resumed its free and tranquil course. It was divided between the town and the country, and both made me happy. Of my societies in town, the only one I no longer frequented was that of *les Menus Plaisirs*. Cury, who had been the soul of it, was infirm and ruined. He died a short time afterwards.

When his secret became known (and it was not so till after his death) I have sometimes heard it said in society that he ought to have declared himself the author of the parody. I always maintained that he ought not; and woe to me if he had done it, for it would have been he whom they would have oppressed, and I should have died with grief. My fault was my own, and it would have been in the highest degree unjust if another had suffered for it.

I do not number among my intimate associates the assembly that was held every evening at Mademoiselle l'Espinasse's; for, with the exception of some of D'Alembert's friends, as the Chevalier de Chastellux, the Abbé Morellet, St. Lambert, and myself, this circle was formed of men who were not at all acquainted with each other. She had taken them here and there in society, but so well matched that when they were there they found themselves in most perfect harmony, like the strings of an instrument tuned by a single hand. To follow the comparison, I might say that she played on this instrument with an art that had the features of genius. She seemed to know what sound the string that she was about to touch would produce. I mean to say, she was so well acquainted with our minds and dispositions, that she

had but to speak a word to bring them into play. Nowhere was conversation more lively, more brilliant, nor better regulated than at her house. That degree of temperate, and ever equal warmth, in which she knew how to support it, now by gently inclining it to moderation, and now by animating it, was a rare phenomenon. The continual activity of her soul communicated itself to our minds, but without excess: her imagination was its spring, her reason its regulator. And take notice, that the understandings she thus moved at her will were neither weak nor light: the Condillacs and the Turgots were of the number; D'Alembert by her side was like a simple and a docile child. Her talent for throwing out an idea, and giving it for debate to men of this class; her talent for discussing it herself, and like them with precision, sometimes with eloquence; her aptitude to introduce new ideas and vary conversation with the ease and facility of a fairy, who, with a stroke of her wand, changes at her will the scene of her enchantments,—these merits, I say, were not those of an ordinary woman. It was not with the follies of fashion and vanity that she every day, during four hours of conversation, without languor and without interval, knew how to render herself interesting to a circle of enlightened men.

BOOK VIII

NEITHER the pleasant life I led at Paris, nor my still more pleasant country excursions, ever stole from my dear Odde and my sister the delicious fortnight which every year was reserved for them, and which I went to pass with them at Saumur. It was there that the whole sensibility of my soul was absorbed in enjoyment. By this happy couple, who loved each other more than they loved life or the light of heaven, I saw myself cherished and revered as the source of their happiness. I could not satiate myself with the inexpressible delight of contemplating my own work, in the happiness of two pure souls, whose every prayer was addressed to heaven for blessings on me. Their tenderness went to my heart; their piety enchanted me. Their manners were, if I may so say, native virtue in all its simplicity. To this continual and uninterrupted enjoyment was added that of seeing them

beloved and honored in the town where they lived. Madame Odde was there quoted as the model for women; the name of M. Odde was synonymous with truth and justice. If the commission of the court of excise, established at Saumur, and the company of the farmers-general had any dispute, Odde was their umpire and their conciliator. I was a witness to this confidence, acquired by one who was as another self to me. I witnessed the love of the people for a man exercising a severe office, against whom no complaints were ever heard, so eminently did his humanity soften all transactions. I myself shared the respect that was paid to this pair. They were perpetually occupied in contriving new pleasures for me, and the few days we passed together were all days of rejoicing. You would never have been born, my dear children, if my good sister had lived: I should have retired quietly to pass my riper age with her: but she bore in her bosom the germ of that malady that had been fatal to all my family; and of the dear hope which I had so ardently cherished, I was too soon and too cruelly deprived. . . .

BOOK IX

So long as Heaven had left me, in Madame Odde, a sister tenderly dear, and whose love for me was rather filial than fraternal, secure of having in her worthy and virtuous husband a true friend, whose house would be mine, whose children would be mine, I knew where I could pass my age in peace. The esteem and confidence that Odde had acquired, and the excellent reputation he enjoyed in his profession, rendered his advancement facile and secure; and, had he only preserved the employment that he held at Saumur, my little fortune added to his, would have procured us an honorable sufficiency. Thus, when the world and I should have been weary of each other, my age had a calm and grateful retreat. In this happy confidence, I glided gently down the stream of life, and without solicitude saw myself on my decline.

But when I had lost my sister and her children, when, in his affliction, Odde, abandoning a town where he saw only their tombs, and, resigning his place, had retired to his native province, my prospect of future comfort, till then so serene, suddenly darkened; I saw nothing left but the dangers of

marriage, or the solitude of sad celibacy and neglected old age.

In marriage, I dreaded the domestic vexations that it would have been impossible for me to endure and live, and of which I saw a thousand examples. But a misfortune still more dreadful was that of an old man, obliged either to bear the buffets of the world, while he drags out a wearisome and lingering decay, or to remain alone, deserted, at the mercy of his servants, a prey to their rude insolence and servile dominion. In this painful situation I had more than once attempted to find myself a companion, and to adopt a family that should supply the place of that which death had torn from me. But, by a happy fatality, no one of my projects had succeeded, when I saw arrive at Paris the sister and the niece of my friends the two Morellets. It was a gift from Heaven.

At the same time, amiable as they both appeared to me, the mother by a character of frankness, cordiality, and kindness, the daughter by an air of candor and modesty, that, united to beauty, added to its luster, and both by a language in which I easily perceived as much wit as good sense, I did not imagine that I, who was more than fifty, could be a suitable husband for a girl who was scarcely eighteen. Her dazzling qualities, her bloom of youth, her brilliancy of beauty, with charms that nature had yet scarcely disclosed, were what necessarily suppressed my hope, and with hope the desire of possessing her.

In this agreeable adventure, then, I saw nothing for me but a new and charming society.

Whether it be that Madame de Montigny was predisposed in my favor, or that my good-nature pleased her at first sight, she assumed the tone of an old friend, whom she had met once more, though I was but the friend of her brothers. We supped together. The joy they all felt at meeting animated the repast. I shared this joy as if I too had been their brother. I was invited to dinner for the next day, and by degrees we contracted the habit of seeing each other every day.

The more I conversed with the mother and listened to the daughter, the more I discovered in both that engaging natural manner which has always charmed me. But, again, my age and the slenderness of my fortune did not allow me to an-

ticipate any prospect of that happiness for myself which I foretold for the husband of Mademoiselle de Montigny; and some time had elapsed before the idea occurred to me.

One morning a friend of mine, who was also one of the friends of the Morellets, the Abbé Maury, called on me, and said, "Shall I tell you a piece of news? Mademoiselle de Montigny is going to be married." "Married! to whom?" "To you." "To me!" "Yes, to you yourself." "You are mad, or you are dreaming." "I do not dream, and it is no madness; it is a very sensible thing, and none of your friends doubt it." "Hear me," said I, "and believe me, for I am serious. Mademoiselle de Montigny is a charming girl; I think her accomplished; and for this reason I never entertained the extravagant idea of pretending to be her husband." "Well, you will be so, without having pretended." "At my age!" "Ay, at your age. You are still young, and in full health." And there he was, displaying all his eloquence to prove to me that nothing was more suitable; that I should be loved; that we should make a happy couple; and in a prophetic tone he predicted that we should have charming children.

After this sally he left me to indulge my reflections; and, while I pronounced him to be mad, I began to be scarcely more sane myself. To be fifty-four no longer appeared to me so dreadful an obstacle; health, at that age, might supply the place of youth. I began to think that I might inspire, not love, but a kind and tender friendship; and I recollected what sages had said, that friendship makes more happy couples than love.

I thought I had remarked in this young and beautiful girl some pleasure in seeing me, and some in hearing me; her fine eyes, when fixed on me, had a character of interest and benevolence. I even went so far as to fancy that in the attentions with which her mother honored me, in the pleasure that her uncle showed at the frequency of my visits, there was, perhaps, some disposition favorable to the wish I dared not entertain. I was not rich; but five thousand guineas, securely invested, were the fruit of my savings. In fine, since a sincere friend, the Abbé Maury, thought this union not only rational but desirable on both sides, why should I myself think it so injudicious a match?

I was engaged that day to dine at Morellet's. I went there with an emotion that was new to me. I think, too, I recollect having dressed myself rather more smartly than usual; and from that instant my attention was seriously fixed on what began to interest me very powerfully. Not a word was neglected, not a look escaped me: I delicately made imperceptible advances, and slight attempts on their minds and hearts. The abbé seemed to pay no attention to them; but his sister, his brother, and his niece, appeared to me very sensible to all that came from me.

BOOK X

About this time the abbé made a journey to Brienne, in Champagne, to see the unfortunate Loménic, with whom he had been intimate from his youth; and in his absence the party became more familiar and more closely united.

I well knew that flattering appearances might render the attraction of a first union deceitful; I knew what illusion grace joined with beauty could create: two or three months of acquaintance and social intimacy could scarcely suffice to assure myself of the disposition of a young girl. I had seen more than one in the world who had been taught only to feign and dissemble; but I had heard so much in praise of the simplicity of Mademoiselle de Montigny, and this simplicity appeared to me so unaffected, so pure, and so true, so far removed from every species of dissimulation, of feint, and of artifice, while kindness of heart, innocence, and tender modesty were so visibly expressed in her air and language, that I felt myself irresistibly inclined to believe all I was told of her; and, if I did not give credit to so much semblance of truth, I must renounce all confidence, and believe nothing.

A walk in the gardens at Sceaux ripened my decision. Never did this place appear to me so beautiful; never had I breathed the air of the country with so much delight; the presence of Mademoiselle de Montigny had embellished all: her looks diffused an enchantment around her. What I felt was not that delirium of the senses which is called love; it was a calm enjoyment, such as that of pure spirits is described. Shall I confess it? It seemed to me, then, that for the first time I recognized the true sentiment of love.

Till then, sensual pleasure had been the only charm that had guided me. Here I found myself enchanted by more invincible spells; they were candor, innocence, sweet sensibility, chaste and timid bashfulness, a modesty whose veil adorned grace and beauty; it was virtue crowned with the flowers of youth that ravished my soul still more than my eyes; a kind of sorcery infinitely superior to those of the Armidas that I once thought I saw in the gay world.

My emotion was the more lively because it was suppressed. . . . I longed to make an avowal of it; but to whom? and how would it be received? The good mother gave me an opportunity. In the alley where we were walking, she was at three steps from us with her brother. "What confidence," said she, smiling, "must I have in you, to suffer you to talk thus with my daughter, *tête-à-tête!*" "Madame," answered I, "it is right that I should return that confidence by telling you what was the subject of our conversation. Mademoiselle was picturing to me the happiness you enjoy, by being all four united in one family; and I, who felt envious of this happiness, was going to ask you if a fifth, one like myself, for example, would spoil the society." "I should think not," she replied; "but ask my brother." "I," said the brother frankly, "should be highly pleased with it." "And you, mademoiselle?" "I," said she, "I hope that my uncle the abbé will think as my mother does; but, till his return, permit me to be silent."

As we all concluded that his sentiments would coincide with our own, as my intention was now declared, and the mother, the daughter, and the uncle had consented, I no longer dissembled. I even thought I perceived that a sentiment which occupied *my* mind incessantly found some access to her heart, who was its object.

The abbé made us wait for him; at last he arrived: and, though all had been settled without his consent, he gave it. The next day the contract was signed. He made his niece his heiress after his death and that of his sister; and I, in this deed, drawn up and written by their attorney, was only anxious to render, at my decease, my wife happy, and independent of her children.

Never was a marriage celebrated under happier auspices.

As the confidence between Mademoiselle de Montigny and myself was mutual and perfect, and as we had well persuaded each other that our feelings agreed intimately with the vow which we were about to make at the altar, we pronounced it without agitation or inquietude.

On our return from the church, where Chastellux and Thomas had held over us the nuptial veil, our friends were pleased to leave us for some moments alone; and these moments were employed in expressing mutually our earnest desire to render each other happy. This first effusion of two hearts, that sincerity on one side and innocence on the other, and the tenderest friendship on both, unites forever, is perhaps the most delicious moment in life.

The dinner, after the toilet, was animated by the gayety of the good old times. The guests were D'Alembert, Chastellux, Thomas, St. Lambert, a cousin of the Morellets, and some other common friends. All were occupied with the bride; and, like me, all were so charmed with her, and so jovial, that to see them you would have said that each was her bridegroom.

When we rose from table, we passed into a saloon, which was decorated by the rich library of the Abbé Morellet. A harpsichord and little desks announced music; but what new and bewitching music were we to hear! My opera of "Roland," the first French opera that had ever been set to Italian music; and to execute it, the finest voices and the most distinguished musicians of the opera-house!

The emotion that this novelty excited had all the charm of surprise. Piccini was at the harpsichord; he animated the orchestra and the singers with the fire of his genius. The Neapolitan and Swedish ambassadors were present at this concert, and were delighted with it. Marshal Beauveau was likewise at the fête. This species of enchantment lasted till supper, to which the singers and instrumental performers were invited.

Thus passed this joyous day, the epoch and the presage of that happiness which has diffused itself over the remainder of my life, through the adversities that have often disturbed but have never impaired it.

It was agreed that we should live together, the two uncles, the mother, and ourselves, each paying a fifth part of the

expenses of the house; and this plan suited me in every respect. It united the advantage of domestic fellowship to that of a society of friends, which we had only to enjoy.

If I had had a passion for celebrity, two great examples would have cured me of it; that of Voltaire, and that of Rousseau; examples very different, quite opposite in many respects, but agreeing in this point, that the same thirst for praise and renown was the torment of their lives.

Voltaire, whom I had just seen expire, had sought glory by all the roads that are open to genius, which he had deserved by his immense exertions and brilliant results. But, on every road to fame, he had encountered envy, and all the furies by whom she is escorted. Never did any man of letters bear so much outrage, without any other crime than that of possessing great talents and the ardor of signalizing them. Those who envied him fancied they could be his rivals by showing themselves his enemies; those whom as he passed he trod under foot, insulted him as they crawled. His whole life was a contest, which he unweariedly maintained. The combat was not always worthy of him; and he had more insects to crush than serpents to strangle. But, though he would not provoke, neither would he overlook offense: the vilest of his assailants have been branded by his hand: the shaft of ridicule was the instrument of his vengeance, and he wielded it most fearfully and cruelly. But to him, the greatest of blessings, repose, was unknown. It is true that envy at last appeared tired of the pursuit, and began to spare him on the brink of the grave. On his return to Paris, after a long exile, he enjoyed his renown, and felt the enthusiasm of a whole people grateful for the pleasures that he had afforded them. The weak and last effort that he made to amuse them, "Irène," was applauded as "Zaïre" had been; and this representation, at which he was crowned, was to him the most delightful triumph. But at what a moment did this tardy consolation reach him, the recompense of so much anxiety! The next day I saw him in bed. "Well," said I, "are you at last satiated with glory?" "Ah! my good friend," he replied; "you talk to me of glory, and I am dying in frightful torture."

Such was the end of one of the most illustrious of all lit-

erary men, and one of the most engaging of all social companions. He was alive to injury, but so he was to friendship. That with which he honored my youth was unvaried till his death, and a last proof that he showed me of it was the reception, full of grace and kindness, which he gave my wife when I presented her to him. His house was perpetually filled with the crowd that pressed to see him, and we were witnesses of the fatigue he underwent to reply suitably to each. That continual attention exhausted his strength; and for his true friends it was a painful spectacle. But we were admitted to his supper-parties, and there we enjoyed the last glimmerings of that brilliant intellect which was soon to be wholly extinguished.

Like him, Rousseau was wretched, and through the same passion. But the ambition of Voltaire was imbued with modesty, as may be seen in his letters; whereas that of Rousseau was coupled with vanity; the proof of it is in his writings.

I had seen him, in the society of the most estimable men of letters, welcomed and esteemed; that was not enough for him; their celebrity shaded his, and he thought them jealous. To him their kindness was suspicious. He began by distrusting, and ended by aspersing them. He had friends in spite of himself; their benevolence was importunate to him. He received their favors; but he accused them of wishing to humble, to dishonor, to defame him; and he returned their beneficence with the most odious defamation.

He was never spoken of in society but with extreme interest. Even criticism itself as regarded him was full of respect, and tempered with eulogies. He would say, it was only the more artful and perfidious. In the most calm retreat, he always chose to fancy or affirm that he was persecuted. His disease was that of imagining in the most fortuitous events, in the most common occurrences, some intention of injuring him, as if in the world all the eyes of envy had been fixed on him alone. If the Duke de Choiseul had conceived the conquest of Corsica, it was in order to take from him the glory of being its legislator. If the same duke went to sup at Montmorency with the Duchess of Luxembourg, it was to usurp the place that he was wont to occupy near her at table. Hume, he would say, was envious of the reception

which the Prince de Conty had given him. He never pardoned Grimm for having had some preference over him at Madame d'Epinay's; and you may see in his "Memoirs" how his cruel vanity revenged this offense.

Thus were the lives of Voltaire and Rousseau perpetually, though differently, agitated. For the one had often been reserved the sharpest pains, yet not without some intense enjoyments; for the other, one continued flood of bitterness, without any mixture of joy or sweetness. Most certainly at no price would I have wished for the condition of Rousseau; he could not endure it himself; and, after having poisoned his days, I am not at all surprised that he voluntarily abridged their duration.

As for Voltaire, I confess that I likewise thought his glory too dearly purchased by the afflictions to which it had exposed him; and I used to repeat again and again,—Less luster and more quiet.

Limited in my ambition, first by the necessity of adapting my flight to the feebleness of my wings, and then again by the love of that tranquillity of mind which accompanies peaceful employment, and which I believed to be the lot of humble mediocrity, I should have been contented in that happy state. Thus, early renouncing all presumptuous attempts, I had as it were capitulated with envy, and reduced myself to that kind of writing in which, with her, success is pardoned without difficulty. I was not the more spared for it; and I found that little things still inspire, in little souls, an envious malignity.

I have described my friendship for D'Alembert, and the value I set on his, during forty years. After the death of Mademoiselle l'Espinasse, he was a prey to sorrow and melancholy. But occasionally he would comfort his heart's deep wound with some drops of the balm of this consoling friendship. It was, above all, with my wife that he loved to divert his cares: she took the tenderest interest in them. He and Thomas, the two men of letters whose talents and knowledge ought to have most overawed her, were those with whom she was most at her ease. She preferred no amusement to their conversation. Thomas appeared to have still a long time to live for glory and friendship. But D'Alembert began to feel

the torments of the stone; and he shortly existed only to suffer and die slowly in the most excruciating anguish.

In a feeble sketch of his eulogy, I have essayed to paint the mild equality of his character, always true, always simple, because it was natural, removed from all concealment, "with a mixture of force and feebleness, but whose force was virtue, and whose feebleness was benevolent feeling." In lamenting his loss, I was far from thinking of succeeding him in the place of perpetual secretary to the French Academy. I was myself on the point of following him to the tomb, being seized with a malignant fever, similar to that of which Bouvard had already cured me, and from which he rescued me again. How infinitely should I bless the memory of a man to whom I have twice owed my life, and who, till the total failure of his strength and spirits, never ceased to bestow the tenderest cares on my children!

BOOK XI

On our return to Paris, the French Academy having been summoned for the election of its perpetual secretary, of twenty-four elective voices, eighteen were united in my favor. My two competitors were Beauzée and Suard.

My country house had in summer still more charms for me than the town had ever had. A chosen society, composed to my wife's taste, came successively to vary our leisure, and enjoy with us that rustic opulence that our gardens afforded, where the espalier, the orchard, the vine-arbor, and the kitchen-garden furnished us with the fruits and vegetables of every season; presents with which nature covered gratuitously a frugal table, and which changed a moderate dinner into a delicious feast. There reigned innocent mirth, confidence, a liberality of thought whose limits all knew, and which no one ever abused.

It was about this time that my wife agreed with me on the necessity of taking a house to ourselves. But, as the separation took place with the kind consent of her uncles and mother, we removed from them as short a distance as possible. My wife was not insensible to the pleasure of finding herself at home, mistress of her own house. For myself, I felt, I confess, great comfort in living with the Abbé Morellet

in complete independence; and he himself was much more at his ease with me. He had introduced into his house another niece, young, lovely, full of wit and accomplishments, now Madame Cheron, to whom my wife resigned her apartment. Thus all passed with the best understanding.

Soon after, the interests of the state, and anxiety for the fate of my country, occupied my mind; my private life changed its complexion, and assumed a coloring that will necessarily tinge the rest of these Memoirs.

I am not writing the history of the revolution. "Quæ contentio divina et humana cuncta permiscuit, eòque vecordiæ processit, uti studiis civilibus bellum finem faceret." (*Sallust Jug.*) But, if the life of man be a journey, can I recount mine, without telling through what events, and by what torrents, what abysses, what wilds inhabited by tigers and serpents, it has passed? For it is thus that I retrace our ten years of misfortunes, almost doubting whether it be not a violent and fatal dream.

Although the situation of public affairs, and the fermentation of the public mind in every branch of the state, had long appeared to threaten an approaching crisis, it is nevertheless true that it happened only from the imprudence of those who persisted in thinking it impossible.

The nation, constantly faithful to its laws, its kings, its ancient constitution, content through instinct with the portion of liberty, property, prosperity, glory, and power which it enjoyed, did not the less hope for some salutary amendment in the vices and errors of the ancient administration.

This hope had above all acquired fresh vigor on the accession of Louis XVI., to the crown. And indeed from that period, if the will of a young king, full of rectitude and candor, had been seconded as it ought to have been, all would have been repaired without any convulsion.

BOOK XII

THE 31st of July was a day remarkable for Necker's return, and for the kind of triumph with which he was honored at the Hôtel de Ville.

In returning from Basle, where he had received the two letters for his recall, one from the king, the other from the

national assembly, Necker had seen on his road the excesses in which the populace everywhere indulged; he had endeavored to calm them, to spread on his passage milder feelings, and to inspire, wherever he went, a horror of injustice and violence.

The courts of justice were awed; the laws were without force, and the people despised them. All had heard the ancient edicts declared null; they now refused to pay the taxes, previously established; no one dared to compel them to it, and the faction made them believe that it had freed them from taxation.

In the meantime the treasury was quite empty, and its springs all nearly exhausted. Necker came to expose this penury to the assembly, and to request that it would authorize a loan of one million and a quarter at five per cent. This moderate interest was maliciously cavilled at; it was reduced to four; and the public now seeing in Necker only a minister opposed and disliked by the commons, the signal for his fall was the blow to his credit.

A patriotic contribution was the momentary resource resorted to by the assembly; and then, leaving the minister to torment himself with inquietude in order to provide for the exigencies of the state, it entered upon the work of a constitution which it authorized itself to create, not only without the powers and consent of the nation, but in contempt of the express command which the nation itself had inserted in the instructions to its constituents, not to touch the ancient bases and fundamental principles of the existing monarchy.

On the 4th of August, the evening sitting had been marked by resolutions and sacrifices that ought to have pacified all men. The clergy and the nobility had, by acclamation, renounced their privileges. The king himself had consented without reserve to all the renunciations made and decreed in the sitting of the 14th of August. But he refused his assent plainly and simply to the ambiguous declaration of the rights of man, and to the nineteen articles of the constitution that had been presented to him. There were other articles to which all foresaw that he would refuse his sanction; and, although the *veto* which he reserved to himself was only suspensive, it was enough to arrest the march of the revolution. It became

necessary to overcome this obstacle; and, if force were resorted to in order to conquer his opposition, the king might well form a resolution to which he had so long refused his concurrence.

This was indeed the true reason why the project of having the king at Paris was formed, and why thirty thousand seditious rebels were sent to Versailles (the 5th of October, 1789) with artillery at their head, and a crowd of those impure women who in all riots are made to march in front. The pretext of their mission was to go and complain of the dearness of bread.

I will not describe the brutality of that populace thus led to Versailles to carry off the king and his family. The trial of Du Châtelet has revealed that horrible mystery, that crime from which the assembly in vain endeavored to clear the Duke d'Orleans and Mirabeau. The facts that relate to it are consigned to the memoirs of the time, which my children will read. They will there see, and shudder while they see, the faithful bodyguards, who were forbidden by the king to fire on the people, massacred even to the threshold of the queen's chamber, and their heads carried on pikes under the windows of the palace; they will see that affrighted queen, trembling for the king and for her children, fly from her bed, which a moment afterwards was pierced with a hundred bayonets, and hasten to throw herself into the arms of the king, where she expected death; they will see this august pair, in the midst of a savage people, oppose to its rage the most magnanimous mildness, show it their children in order to move it to compassion, and ask what can be done to appease it. "Let the king come with us to Paris." This was the answer of the people, and the avowal of the plot which it was sent to execute.

As soon as he had arrived at the Tuileries with his family, the assembly declared that it could not remain separate from the person of the king; it came and established itself in Paris, on the 19th of October, 1789, and in these changes the good people fancied it beheld its safety.

The first act of the king at Paris was his acceptance of the first articles of the constitution, and the sanction of the rights of man.

These memoirs are not a history of the revolution. You will read it elsewhere, my children, and will see, after this epoch of the 19th of October, a long train of memorable events all easy to divine after the first victories of the successful party. The property of the clergy was declared national on the 2d of November; the creation of assignats on the 21st of December; the quantity, form, and fabrication of this money determined on the 17th of April, 1790; nobility and all titles abolished on the 19th of June following; the king's flight on the 21st of June, 1791; his return to Paris on the 25th; finally, the acceptance of the whole constitution by the king on the 3d of September, and the promulgation of this act on the 28th of the same month.

The legislative assembly, installed on the 1st of October, 1791, followed and even exaggerated the spirit of the constituent assembly. I here again recall dates, in order to arrive at what is personal to me. On the 29th of November a decree was passed inviting the king to request the princes of the empire not to suffer the armaments of the fugitive princes. On the 14th of December, the king pronounces, on his declaration to these princes, a speech that is applauded. On the 1st of January, 1792, the decree of accusation is made against the brothers of Louis XVI. On the 1st of March happened the death of the Emperor Leopold. On the 29th of May, the assassination of Gustavus III., King of Sweden. On the 20th of April, declaration of war by France against the new King of Hungary and Bohemia. In the month of June the king refuses his sanction to two decrees; and this refusal becomes the pretext of the insurrection of the faubourgs, that are sent in a vast tumultuous mass to the Tuileries. The king, who hears them threaten with savage cries and horrible imprecations to break open the doors of his apartment, orders that they may be opened. He presents himself with a calm air to hear their petition. They demand that he should sanction the decrees to which he has refused his assent. "My sanction is free," answered the king; "and this is not the moment either to solicit or to obtain it."

Two days afterwards, in his proclamation against this act of violence, he declared that it would never be necessary to wrest from him his assent to whatever he should think just,

and productive of public good; but that he would expose, if it were needful, his peace and even his safety in order to do his duty.

The 31st of July was marked by the arrival of the Marseillais at Paris; a kind of satellites that the revolutionists kept at their orders for great exertions. On the 3d of August, in the name of the sections of Paris, Pétion presents to the assembly a petition for the deposition of the king. On the 6th a report is studiously spread at the Tuileries that the king has resolved to fly. It was then that, by a too just presentiment of what was going to happen, my wife urged me to quit that country-house to which she had been so much attached, and to seek some retreat at a distance from Paris, where, in obscurity, we might breathe in peace.

We knew not whither to direct our steps. The tutor of our children decided our irresolution. It was he who assured us that in Normandy, where he was born, we should readily find a safe and peaceful asylum; but some time was requisite in order to procure it; and, on arriving at Evreux, we did not yet know where to lay our heads. The master of the inn where we alighted had, at a few paces from the town, in the hamlet of St. Germain, a pretty little house, seated on the borders of the Iton, and at the gate of the gardens of Navarre. He offered it to us. Having taken this place, we resolved to stay there till Charpentier's family should have found us a suitable dwelling nearer to Gaillon, his native place.

If, in the painful state in which our minds then were, any retreat could have been charming, that of this little hamlet would have been so; but we had scarcely arrived at Evreux when we learned the horrible event of the 10th of August.

At Paris, at the dawn of day, of that day which was to precede days yet more fatal, the squares and streets near the Tuileries were full of armed men with a train of artillery. It was the people of the faubourgs, supported by the band of Marseillais, who came to besiege the king in his palace.

That unfortunate prince had only a few Swiss-guards for his defense; and, though it has been said that there was in the garden of the Tuileries a crowd of brave and honest men who would have rallied round his person if he had chosen to show himself, he doubtless thought resistance either criminal

or impossible; he was advised to repair with his family to the bosom of the national assembly; thither he fled.

In the meanwhile his brave Swiss soldiers, who, faithful to their orders, defended in the courts the approach to the palace, found themselves obliged to fire on the people. The people were repulsed, and the guards stood firm at their post, when they learned that the king had retired. Their courage then forsook them; and, having dispersed, they were almost all massacred in Paris.

The king was transferred to the prison of the tower of the Temple, with his wife, his children, and his sister, on the 13th of August.

It was in these days of terror and trembling that a man came to lodge near us, in the hamlet of St. Germain, who, as I supposed, was unknown to me. In his disguise, I had so much difficulty in recollecting where I could have seen him that he was obliged to tell me his name. It was Lorry, the Bishop of Augers. Our recollection of each other was made tender by the misfortune of his situation, which he did not cease to support with considerable courage and firmness.

We soon became social friends; at his desire our table was in common; and in better times this accidental connection would have been reciprocally agreeable. Lodged together on the borders of a pretty river, in the most beautiful season of the year, having enchanting gardens and a superb forest for our walks, perfectly agreeing in our opinions, in our tastes, and in our principles, the remembrance of a world in which we had lived furnished us with subjects for conversation that were inexhaustible; but all these sweets were embittered by the sorrows with which we were perpetually assailed.

The convention succeeded the legislative assembly on the 21st of September. Its first decree was the abolition of royalty.

At the same time, at the name of republican liberty, columns of volunteers ran to the armies; we found ourselves on their march, and they disturbed our repose. Besides, the approach of winter rendered the place where we were damp and unhealthy: we were obliged to quit it, and it was not without regret that we there left the good bishop. We retired, my wife and I, to Couvicourt. On the 11th of December the

king appeared at the bar of the convention, and was interrogated. He asked for two lawyers, Tronchet and Target, for his counsel. Target refused to perform this sacred duty; the virtuous Malesherbes eagerly offered to take his place; this was consented to. Tronchet and Malesherbes asked to have the honest and feeling De Seze to assist them, and that too was granted. On the 26th the king appeared for the second time, with his three defenders. De Seze addressed the assembly, but the king had not allowed him, in his defense, any oratorical parade. In obeying him, De Seze was but the more impassioned. On the 17th of January, 1793, the sentence of death was pronounced by a majority of 366 votes against 355. The king lodged an appeal to the nation. The appeal was rejected. On the 19th it was decided by a majority of 380 votes against 310, that there should be no delay in the execution of the sentence, and on the 21st, Louis XVI. had his head cut off on the "Place Louis XV." His confessor, at the foot of the scaffold, pronounced these ever-memorable words: "Son of St. Louis, ascend to heaven!" The king on the scaffold wished to address the people; Santerre, commanding the execution, and one of the leaders of the Faubourg St. Antoine, ordered the drums to beat, in order to stifle his voice. This execution was succeeded at a little interval of time by that of the three other prisoners of the Temple. On the 21st of January the king had perished on the scaffold. On the 16th of October the queen his wife shared the same fate. On the 21st of Floréal in the following year Elizabeth, the king's sister, terminated her innocent life under the same instrument of death; and on the 20th Prairial of the same year the dauphin died in the Temple.

BOOK XIII

The French revolution might have pleaded an honorable example in ancient Rome. Louis XVI. had not one of the vices of the Tarquins, nor could he be accused either of pride or violence; without any other reason than that of being weary of its kings, France had the power to expel them and their whole race.

But the 21st of January, 1793, began, and could only begin, the reign of terror.

The revolutionists appeared to have conceived the vast infernal project of depraving a whole people, of associating vices and crimes, of propagating bad morals by bad laws, and of realizing by general corruption all that is attributed to the dark genius of human nature.

Religious opinions, the belief in a God, the idea of futurity, could curb the inclination to crime; the authority of the father could restrain the child; morality, by its principles of humanity, equity, and modesty, could regenerate a corrupt race. The project of depravation was directed against all these ties. We heard incredulity and blasphemy proclaimed; we saw libertinism affect to despise the idea of a God, sacrilege insult the altars, and crime pride itself on the hope of annihilation; we saw broken, all the ties of subordination that nature forms; children, made by the laws independent of their fathers, had only to wish for their death in order to be secure, without their consent and in spite of their will, of sharing their spoil. The conjugal knot was still the means of perpetuating domestic virtues, and of keeping in intimate union the husband, wife, and child: this tie was rendered fragile at will; marriage became no more than a legal prostitution, a transient connection, which licentiousness, caprice, and inconstancy might form and dissolve as fancy varied. In fine, honor, public faith, decorum, the respect for self and for public opinion, and the veneration which the sacred image of virtue inspired, had offered a rallying point for souls susceptible of repentant feelings, and awake to the impressions of example. All this was destroyed. The impudence of vice, the audacity of shame, the emulation of license even to the most unbridled dissoluteness, were professed and erected into maxims of republican morality; and the system of Mirabeau, and of the Duke d'Orleans, that system, the aim of which was the dark corruption of a whole generation, seemed to reign throughout France. Thus was formed that revolutionary despotism, that Colossus of mire, kneaded and cemented with blood.

Retired as we were in our cottage of Ablonville, to which we had gone on quitting Couvicourt, we did not cease to dread the influence of so corrupted an age on our children; and we were employing every care to fortify them by a salutary and virtuous education, when the almost sudden death of their

faithful tutor added a domestic affliction that completed the measure of our sufferings. A putrid fever of extreme malignity robbed us of that excellent young man. Our children must remember the grief which this loss caused us, and the fear we had lest they should suffer from the contagious air of a pestilential malady.

Their mother and I knew not what course to take, and our last resource was to go and seek refuge in some inn at Vernon, when the idea was suggested to us of asking asylum of a venerable old man, who, in the village of Aubevoie, at a little distance from ours, occupied a house large enough to lodge us all, without any inconvenience to himself. This circumstance of my life has something romantic in it.

The old man, who, affected by our situation, was eager to receive us, was one of the monks who had been driven from the neighboring monastery of Carthusians. His name was Dom Honorat. He was older than I. His manners called to mind those of the anchorets of the Thebaid. This excellent man seemed to be sent by Heaven to edify and to console us. He breathed piety, but a piety all gentleness, indulgence, affection, and charity; a piety that was truly evangelic. He rarely allowed himself to dine with us; but, for an hour in the afternoon, and somewhat longer in the evening, he used to come and discourse to us of the great objects on which he incessantly meditated, of divine providence, of the immortality of the soul, of the life to come, of the morality of the gospel; and all this flowed naturally, simply, and from the bottom of his heart, with a lively faith and true feeling. It would have been cruel to express a doubt on subjects that gave consolation to his age and solitude. The soul of this good old man was perpetually in heaven; and it was so grateful to us to raise ourselves to heaven with him, that it would have been inhuman to have wished to make him descend. He revived us under the dejection into which we had been thrown by the death of the king; and in calling to recollection the words of the confessor, "Son of St. Louis, ascend to heaven," "Yes," said he with confidence, "he is now before God, and certain I am that he is imploring pardon for his enemies." He thought the same of the virtuous martyrs of the 2d of September.

The alleviation which a pious hermit might feel in his situation by associating with us was offensive to the mayor of Aubevoie. At the expiration of eighteen days he came to tell me that it was time for us to retire. Fortunately, the air of our house was purified; and, after having suitably testified our gratitude to him who had so well received us, we returned to our home.

This modest and humble dwelling was my own, I had bought it; but what a fatal change did it announce in our past fortune. I had just quitted, near Paris, a country-house that formed our delight, a garden plentifully stored; and that smiling retreat was changed, as by the wand of an enchanter, into a species of cottage very small and very decayed. It was here that we were obliged to endeavor to accommodate ourselves to our situation, and, if possible, to live as honorably in poverty as we had lived in days of ease. The trial was painful; my literary places were suppressed; the French Academy, was soon to be destroyed; my pension as a man of letters, the fruit of my labors, was no longer of any value. The only solid property I still had was that little farm at Paray, which the prudent foresight of my wife had engaged me to purchase. I was obliged to lay down my carriage, and to turn away even the servant that my old age would have needed. But, in this narrow dwelling, where we had scarcely the indispensable necessaries, my wife had the good understanding and the art to limit our expenses by simplifying our wants; and I can say that our own sad condition affected us but little in comparison with the public calamity. The care I gave to the instruction of my children, the tender part that their mother took in their moral education, and if I may be allowed to say it, the excellence of their dispositions, were an inexpressible resource to us in our solitude. They consoled us for a misfortune which was not the misfortune of their age. At least we forebore to afflict them with it. The storm passes over their heads, used we to say, smiling on them; and for them we have the hope of more calm and serene weather.

But the storm still increased; we saw it extend itself over the whole nation; it was not a civil war, for one of the two parties was passive and disarmed; but on one side it was a jealous hatred, and on the other a melancholy terror.

One of the itinerant executioners of the faction had a guillotine engraven on his seal as an emblem. Another, at his dinner, had one of those instruments on his table, with which he amused himself by cutting off the head of a chicken that had been served up to him; and while these made a mockery of the instrument of their barbarity, others boasted to the convention of their economy and diligence in the execution of its decrees. "Shooting is too tedious," one of them wrote to the convention, "and powder and ball are thereby expended. We have adopted the plan of putting them (the prisoners) in large boats in the middle of the river; and at half a league from the town we sink the boat. Saint-Florent and the other places," added he, "are full of prisoners. They too shall have the patriotic baptism." I need not say what shudderings of horror we felt at the railleries of these monsters. The atrocities that made humanity tremble, the drownings of Carrier in the Loire, the cannonades with case-shot of Collot-d'Herbois at Lyons, obtained honorable mention in the journals of the convention. The infernal acts of Lebon in the Pas-de-Calais were only "forms somewhat severe," which ought to be pardoned, and they were pardoned!

A formidable party was suddenly formed in the bosom of the convention against Robespierre; Tallien denounced him. He was instantly outlawed (the 9th of Thermidor), surprised, torn from the town-hall, whither he had flown, and dragged to the scaffold (on the 10th) where he had every day immolated so many innocent victims.

BOOK XIV

The events which I have just recalled to memory have so occupied my fancy, that amid so many public calamities I have almost forgotten myself. The impression which this mass of misery made on me was indeed so lively and so deep, it was very natural that what concerned only myself should have very often been forgotten. Not but that I endeavored, by diversions of labor and study, to defend myself from these wearisome reflections whose continued action might have terminated in a dark melancholy, or in a fixity of ideas still more dangerous to the weak and frail organs of man.

When my imagination could be diverted by amusing rev-

eries, I made new tales, less gay than those which I had written in the sunshine of my life and the smiling leisure of prosperity; but a little more philosophical, and in a tone that suited better with my age and the circumstances of the times.

When these dreams failed me, I exerted my reason, and tried to employ the time of my retreat and solitude better, by composing, for the instruction of my children, an elementary course of study, in little "Treatises of Grammar, Logic, Metaphysics, and Morality," in which I collected with care what I had learned in my reading of different kinds, in order to transmit the fruits of it to them.

Sometimes, to amuse or instruct them by example, I employed our winter evenings in recounting to them by the fireside some little adventures of my youth; and my wife, perceiving that these recitals interested them, pressed me to write for them the events of my life.

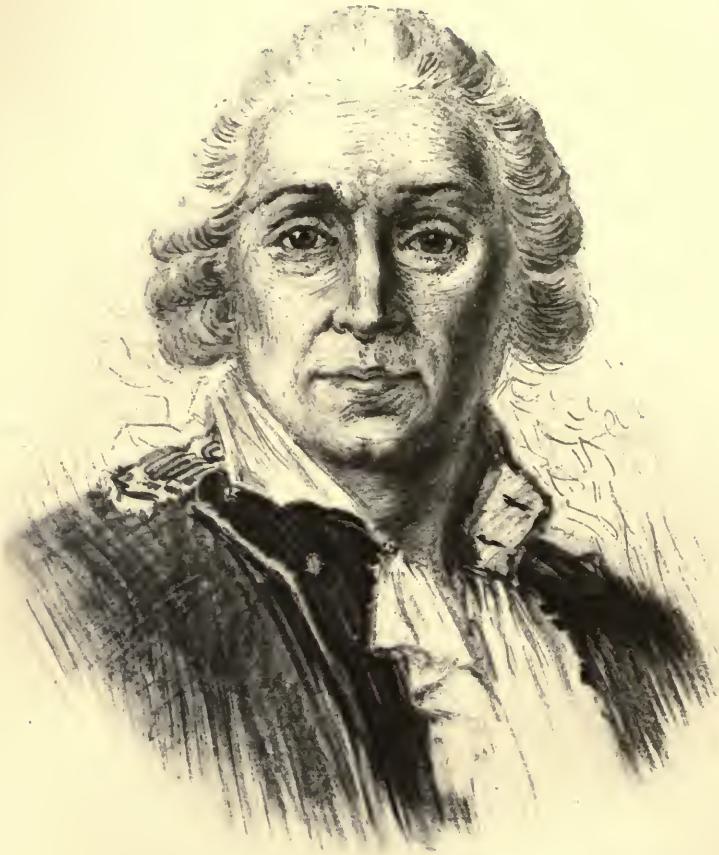
It was thus that I became engaged to write these volumes of my Memoirs. I will freely confess, with Madame de Staël, that I have only painted myself in profile; but I wrote for my children.

These recollections were a real comfort and alleviation to me, inasmuch as they effaced, at least for moments, the sad images of the present, by the gentle dreams of the past.

I now, however, come to an epoch when the interest of public affairs seized on me more strongly and more closely than ever. By my duty as a citizen, I was called to that primary assembly of the canton of Gaillon where the new constitution was going to be proposed. This was the moment to observe the state and shades of national sentiment, and that observation was interesting; for the problem was to be submitted to discussion, and simultaneously solved by the majority of votes in all the primary assemblies throughout the republic.

In that where I was present, it was evident to me that two parties balanced each other.

THE END



HENRI DE LATUDE

THE FRENCH PRISONER WHOSE SUFFERINGS CAUSED THE DESTRUCTION OF THE BASTILLE

1725-1805

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

The sufferings of Henri de Latude, while perhaps not the greatest ever endured by man, are admittedly the most intense persecutions ever recorded by an innocent man. Never having committed any crime, never having been accused, judged or sentenced, he was for thirty-five years doomed to awful torments and heart-breaking betrayals. His memoirs are the truthful record of those ghastly years, written to arouse the French people, to prove his innocence and the iniquity of the régime under which France lived. They form the most pathetic account of man's suffering ever recorded, yet always there is the hope of a brave spirit illuminating and alleviating his torture.

Henri de Latude was born in 1725 at the Château de Craiseih in France. Doubt is thrown on the legitimacy of his birth, but certainly the Marquis de Craiseih educated him as a son and procured him a commission in a royal regiment. After the peace of 1748, Latude returned to Paris to complete his studies.

Madame de Pompadour, courtesan and favorite of Louis XV, ruled in France. Proud and revengeful, afraid lest the populace rise against her, afraid lest Louis tire of her, she ruled with an arrogance and vindictiveness which made it impossible to stand against her. Latude, desirous of a patron, sought to attract Madame Pompadour's attention, and therefore began the escapade which ended in his imprisonment.

No work of fiction contains such thrilling incidents as are here related by this unfortunate man who, entering prison on the whim of a courtesan, a mere youth, left it thirty-five years later a gray-headed, broken-down old man. He suffered the most loathsome tortures, results of vermin, filth and neglect, far worse than those of the Inquisition. He several times escaped, his escape from the Bastille being one of the cleverest on record, and was once released, only to be again imprisoned within the week. During these thirty-five years, Latude was confined in four prisons, the Bastille, Vincennes, the mad-house of Charenton, and Bicetre. He

was finally liberated through the brave efforts of a Madame Legros, a stranger, who had learned by chance of his sad fate. His life after release was uneventful.

History has fully recognized that Latude's account of his imprisonment was indirectly responsible for the destruction of the Bastille. The people had previously thought little of this fortress and feared it even less, considering it a place of confinement intended only for nobles, their worst enemies. After the publication of Latude's heart-rending story, the belief grew, aided by many prominent writers, that the Bastille was the last bulwark of the despotic order which was doomed to disappear. Yet it is a curious fact that, of the four prisons in which Latude was confined, he himself declares that in the Bastille alone had he any degree of comfort. There he had a room to himself, abundant meals, outdoor exercise, and even a valet. The revolutionary mob that stormed the Bastille, found there only seven prisoners, none of them victims of the State, and each confined for a definite crime. The same mob allowed the hundreds of prisoners in Bicetre to remain in agony in the vilest of tortures.

MEMOIRS OF HENRI MASERS DE LATUDE

CHAPTER I

France, stained during so many ages by the weakness of her kings, and the insolent despotism of their ministers, burst at last the chains under the weight of which she had been so long overwhelmed, and which the world believed she was base enough no longer to blush for. Her first attention, her first efforts, on emerging from this shameful stupor, were directed towards the State Prisons. All Europe watched her progress attentively, and applauded the courage with which she destroyed those frightful dens, that concealed the sentences of despotic power, its crimes, and its vengeance. Who does not bless the memorable day, when we beheld those infamous walls crumbled at the first shout of liberty? But, that France may estimate the full value of her heroic achievement, let her learn the enormities of which the gods of this Tartarus were capable, and the height of audacity to which their unrestrained license had carried them.

The victim during thirty-five years of their cruel hatred, I have too well learned to know these dreadful truths. For thirty-five years I have vainly wearied those infernal vaults

with my sighs and my despair; my mind shattered incessantly by paroxysms of rage, and beaten down by grief; my limbs bruised and torn by the weight and friction of my chains; my body preyed upon by the most loathsome vermin; breathing, instead of air, nothing but putrid exhalations; and, to complete the horror of my situation, succored and restored, whenever death approached to terminate my sufferings, and snatch me from my executioners. Such was my lot during this long series of years. O ye for whom time glides on, and flies so rapidly away, in the midst of pleasures and the enjoyment of liberty, if you can conceive that he arrests his course, for the unfortunate who groans in the solitude of a dungeon, calculate how many *ages* are included in this dreary period of thirty-five years!

My object is not solely to excite your compassion; I hope to instruct you by my misfortunes. Your daily experience teaches you that flagrant crimes frequently escape punishment; you will now learn how a favorite minion and her unworthy satellites dared to revenge themselves for a trifling offense. Follow me in the painful career I have too long traversed—your revolted reason will often regard as improbable the truths I shall unveil; but I pledge myself to relate nothing but facts, of the greater number of which I can furnish proofs, or produce witnesses. Two of my most inveterate persecutors are still living—let them deny my assertions if they dare. To-day, I denounce them at the tribunal of the public: to-morrow, I shall drag them before that of the laws: there I shall demand from them a strict account of every tear they have made me shed; and upon these same facts we shall mutually be judged.

I was born on the 23d of March, 1725, at the Château de Craiseih, near Montagnac, in Languedoc, on an estate belonging to my father, the Marquis de Latude, a Knight of the Royal and Military Order of St. Louis, Lieutenant-colonel of the regiment of Dragoons of Orleans, and, at his death, Lieutenant of the King at Sedan. My education was that of a gentleman destined to serve his king and country. I shall not enter into the detail of my earliest years: the real history of my life is that of my misfortunes. I had evinced a decided turn for mathematics: my parents cultivated this taste, and

favored my own inclination, which led me to enter the Corps of Engineers. At the age of twenty-two, my father placed me under the charge of his friend Monsieur Dumai, at that time Commandant of Engineers at Bergen op Zoom. He received me as a supernumerary, and allowed me to assume the uniform. I was on the point of being enrolled, when, unfortunately for me, the peace of 1748 was concluded. My father wished me to profit by the interval of repose, and sent me to Paris to pursue my course of mathematics, and complete my education.

I was young,—I had all the activity of my age, and I felt the restlessness it excites in those who wish to be distinguished, and who often mistake for talent the mere excitement of animal spirits. I would have purchased fame at any sacrifice; but, to achieve this, patrons were necessary. I wished for powerful ones: I sought for them in the highest rank, instigated by vanity, or rather by the love of glory; for why should I degrade the passion, which in a youthful mind is a noble one, and worthy of esteem? I was obscure—I wished to become known, and, in seeking the means of notoriety, I yielded to the dictates of my imagination. Its suggestions were as follows.

The Marchioness de Pompadour was at that time the reigning favorite. This haughty woman expiated by universal hatred the crime of having deprived the King of the respect and love of his people: she had just sacrificed a popular minister, who, for a mere pleasantry, was punished by disgrace and exile. Her name was never pronounced but with contempt mingled with horror, and every mouth echoed the sentiments with which the hearts of all were filled. One day, in the month of April, 1749, I happened to be in the garden of the Tuileries. Two men, seated near me, were indulging in the most violent philippics against her: the fire which seemed to inflame them communicated itself to me, and excited my imagination, continually directed towards the point where all my meditations tended. I conceived at that moment a project which embraced, as I thought, the certain means of pushing my fortune. To inform Madame de Pompadour of the state of public opinion appeared to me insufficient; I could tell her nothing which, in all probability, she

did not already know; but I thought to signalize my zeal still further, and to interest her in my fate by gratitude. Having committed to the post-office a letter, addressed to the Marchioness, containing a powder that was entirely harmless, I hastened to Versailles and obtained an audience. I related to her the conversation I had overheard; I exaggerated the desire which those two individuals had expressed, of disputing with many others the glory of delivering France from her thraldom; and I concluded by saying that I had followed them to the general post-office, where they deposited a packet which I suspected to be for her, and to contain some extremely subtle poison.

The first impulse of the Marchioness was to express the most lively gratitude, and to offer me a purse well filled with gold. I declined the gift, saying that I aspired to a reward more worthy of her and of myself, after the knowledge I had given her of my condition in life, and my zeal in her service. Suspicious and mistrustful, as all tyrants are, she wished to possess herself of my handwriting; and, under the pretext of keeping my address, she placed me at her desk to give it to her. The natural thoughtlessness of my character, and the joy which the apparent success of my stratagem occasioned, threw me off my guard; and I forgot that, by writing my address in the same hand with the direction of the packet, I should infallibly discover myself. I returned home, exulting in my experiment, and calculating already all the degrees of my future greatness.

The Marchioness, in the meantime, received the packet: she tried the powder inclosed in it upon several animals; and, seeing that its effects were harmless, and recognizing the coincidence of the handwriting, she regarded this hare-brained act of folly as a grievous outrage, or rather as a heinous crime, and forthwith issued the most rigorous orders against me.

On the first of May following, whilst I was indulging in my brilliant reveries, an Exempt named St. Marc, attended by several archers, came to dissipate the pleasing dream. I was then in a furnished hotel, in the *Cul de Sac*[1] *du Coq*. They hurried me into a hackney coach, and, about eight o'clock in the evening, conducted me to the Bastille. I was

[1] Blind alley.

introduced into a hall on the ground floor called the Chamber of Council, where I found all the officers of the prison expecting me. I was searched from head to foot; they stripped me of my clothes, and took from me all that was found on my person,—money, jewels, and papers; they then clothed me in miserable rags, which doubtless had already been impregnated with the tears of many other equally unfortunate wretches. This ceremony, borrowed from the Inquisition and the highway, is called in the Bastille *"faire l'entrée d'un prisonnier,"* —"introducing a prisoner." They made me inscribe the date of my arrival in a register; and finally they conducted me to a chamber in the tower called *"La Tour du Coin,"*—the Tower of the Corner,—and, inclosing me within two massive doors, left me to myself, equally ignorant of the crime I had committed and the fate that awaited me.

On the following day, Monsieur Berryer, then Lieutenant of Police, came to interrogate me. I shall have to speak more than once of this respectable magistrate, and it becomes my duty to describe his character. When the compassion of our fellow-creatures is wearied out by the constant recital of misfortunes, it is a relief to pause for a moment, and contemplate an estimable being whose touching sensibility has sometimes alleviated them. I shall not often enjoy this sad advantage. Monsieur Berryer inspired confidence by his gentle manners and goodness of heart. He had firmness enough to rise beyond prejudices, and, in the exercise of his functions, consulted only his feelings and his duty. He is little known at present, which is not surprising—he was then only appreciated by the unfortunate: such a man was misplaced in the court of the Marchioness de Pompadour. I related to him explicitly what I had done, and the end I had proposed to myself. He saw nothing in this action beyond a youthful indiscretion, pardonable perhaps by its object, and at all events meriting only a slight castigation. He promised me to intercede with Madame de Pompadour, and to demand my liberty. But a man who ventured to contradict her passion, and appeared cold to her injuries, obtained but little influence over her haughty temper: he found her inexorable, and was obliged to confess it.

It is easy to imagine my state when this intelligence reached

me—alone, given up to the wildest imaginations, without hope, without resources, seeking in vain to penetrate my future lot, and discovering nothing but a frightful abyss.

It will easily be believed that I fell sick in my new prison: the good Monsieur Berryer came again to console me. He was indignant at the conduct which had been pursued towards me; but he had no power either to change the system of the state prisons, or the hearts of those who were placed to maintain it. He gave me the most comfortable apartment in the Castle, from which I enjoyed a magnificent view. But what consolation could I derive from this? The idea that my change of prison indicated a long, perhaps a perpetual captivity, would alone have poisoned the most exquisite enjoyment.

My courage was alone sustained by the hope that I should yet, one day, obtain my liberty. I conceived that I had no chance of liberation but through my own exertions; and, from that moment, I solely occupied myself with the means of arriving at my object. I observed every day an old ecclesiastic walking in the garden which belonged to the prison. I learned that he had been a long time confined, on the charge of *Jansenism.* The Abbé de Saint Sauveur, son of a former Lieutenant of the King at Vincennes, had permission to visit him in this garden, and he frequently availed himself of the privilege. The prisoner, also, taught the children of one of the turnkeys to read and write. The Abbé and the children went backwards and forwards without exciting any attention. The hour of their promenades was pretty nearly the same when they permitted me to walk in an adjoining garden, which was also within the inclosure of the Castle. Monsieur Berryer had ordered that I should be allowed to remain there two hours a day, to enjoy the fresh air, and reëstablish my health. On these occasions I was always attended by two turnkeys: sometimes the elder waited in the garden, and the younger came alone to open the door of my prison. I accustomed him, for some time, to see me descend the stairs quicker than himself; and, without waiting for him, I joined his comrade, with whom he always found me when he reached the garden.

One day, resolved to attempt my escape at every hazard, he had scarcely opened the door of my chamber, when I

rushed past him. I was at the bottom of the stairs before he thought of following me. I bolted the door which is there, to cut off all communication between the two turnkeys whilst I executed my project. There were four sentinels to deceive. The first was at a gate which led out from the prison, and was always closed. I knocked at it, and it was opened immediately. I asked quickly for the Abbé de Saint Sauveur. "It is more than two hours," said I, "since our priest is waiting for him in the garden: I run after him in every direction without finding him; but, egad, he shall pay me for my running!" While speaking I kept moving forward with the same celerity. At the end of the arched passage below the clock I encountered another sentinel. I asked him if it was long since the Abbé de Saint Sauveur went out. He answered that he knew nothing about him, and allowed me to pass. I put the same question to the third sentinel, who was at the other side of the drawbridge; he assured me he had not seen him. "I shall soon find him!" cried I. Transported with joy, I ran, I bounded like a child. I arrived before the fourth sentinel, who, far from supposing me a prisoner, was not a jot more surprised than the others that I should run after the Abbé de Saint Sauveur. I cleared the threshold of the gate—I sprang forward—I was beyond their sight—I was free! As often as this situation retraces itself in my memory, my gratitude to Providence is as unbounded as ever, and I feel the same delirium of joy which I then experienced. This happy event occurred on the 25th of June, 1750, about nine months after my removal to Vincennes.

I ran across the fields and vineyards, keeping as far as possible from the high road. I arrived at Paris, shut myself up in a furnished lodging, and enjoyed at last the full pleasure of finding myself *free,* after fourteen months of captivity. The first moments were delicious, but they passed rapidly away: doubt and apprehension disturbed the happy calm. It was necessary to decide on some plan—what was I to do, and what was to become of me? It was certain I should be sought for; and equally so (if I fell again into the hands from which I had escaped), that I should be rigorously punished for flying from the tyranny of a woman who never pardoned. I was sure to be discovered, should I show myself; and if I fled, I ran

the same risk. On the other hand, my condition and inclination both retained me in the capital. Should I then at once brave the dangers that surrounded me, or fly from the sight of all mankind, and condemn myself to a voluntary captivity, more cruel than that from which I had escaped? Up to this period I had only consulted my head: I had reason to mistrust its counsels, and this time I resolved to be guided by my heart. Too much vivacity, hitherto, had made me commit nothing but folly; too much candor in this instance destroyed me, and plunged me back again into the abyss of misery. I judged Madame de Pompadour by myself. I thought I should interest her delicacy in showing my confidence in her generosity, and in not appearing to fear her, or doubt the goodness of her heart. I expected pardon, because, in her place, I would have freely granted it. I knew not then that the feelings and the passions differ, like their possessors, according as they proceed from a pure or corrupted source.

I drew up a memorial, which I addressed to the King. I spoke in it of Madame de Pompadour with respect, and of my fault towards her with repentance. I entreated that she would be satisfied with the punishment I had undergone; or, if fourteen months' imprisonment had not sufficiently expiated my offense, I ventured to implore the clemency of her I had offended, and threw myself on the mercy of my sovereign. I concluded my memorial by naming the asylum I had chosen, with an ingenuousness that depicted strongly the openness of my character, and which ought alone to have obtained pardon for a crime, if I had actually committed one. At Vincennes I had become acquainted with Doctor Quesnay, Physician to the King and the Marchioness. He appeared to feel some interest for me, and offered me his services. I sought him out, and confided to him my memorial, which he promised to transmit without delay. He kept his word too well.

I feel certain the King was touched by my confidence in his goodness, but he seldom followed the first impulses of his soul. Ought I to have imagined he would have consulted them alone, when the question concerned a woman who engrossed all his ideas and all his affections? Ought I not rather to have concluded that this woman, irritated at not being applied to herself, or at being exposed to blush before her sovereign

and admirer, at the discovery of her injustice towards me, would seek by every means in her power to revenge her pride so cruelly wounded? But, once more, I was young—I knew but little of the human heart, still less the heart of tyrants; and I was far from supposing that this woman, occupied and exhausted by so many opposing passions, would continue to feel such active hatred, and pursue so unrelentingly such a trifling offense—but I have paid dearly for my fatal inexperience.

I had named, in my memorial, the place of my retreat. I was immediately sought for, found, and reconducted to the Bastille. It is true they said at first I was only arrested that they might ascertain the mode of my escape from Vincennes, it being of the utmost importance to deprive the other prisoners of similar means, and to learn whether the keepers of the Castle had assisted me in my flight. This last confession they never would have extorted from me; but, as I owed my escape to my own unassisted ingenuity, I related frankly the manner in which I had contrived it.

After this, I expected the fulfillment of their pledge, that my enlargement should be the price of my veracity. I knew not then that false promises were given liberally, doubtless to harass the feelings of the prisoners still more cruelly, and multiply their sufferings. This practice, with which I afterwards became too well acquainted, formed a part of the established system of the Bastille. So far from being restored to liberty, when I had fulfilled the conditions imposed upon me, I was thrown into a dungeon, and experienced treatment which till then I had formed no conception of—but let me not anticipate events.

My former consoler, Monsieur Berryer, came again to alleviate my misfortunes. Abroad, he demanded for me justice or clemency—within the prison, he endeavored to calm my anguish, which appeared less acute when he assured me of his sympathy. He reasoned so mildly, and advised with such affection, that his voice seemed to open a passage to my heart. Would that all who are placed in a similar situation would consider how much the happiness or misery of many of their fellow-creatures is dependent on their conduct—how easy it is to lessen the weight of chains borne by the unfortunate! A

single word can revive their hopes and dry their tears. How little would it cost them to appear to their wretched captives as deities, and how often do they assume the semblance of executioners!

My protector, unable to dispute the orders that had been issued, left me in my dungeon; but he took care that I should receive the same nourishment as before; and, as a little daylight penetrated through a loop-hole into the vault, he directed also that I should be supplied with books, pens, ink, and paper. For some time these resources relieved and consoled me; but at the end of six months they proved insufficient, and I gave myself wholly up to despair. The image of my persecutor continually haunted my imagination—her vengeance and my sufferings were then to know no end—suspense, the most intolerable of torments, disturbed my reason and desolated my heart. Rage and indignation, long suppressed, boiled within me: in the paroxysm of this madness, I vented my feelings in scurrilous verses; and I had the imprudence to write the following on the margin of one of the books which had been lent to me:—

"Sans esprit, et sans agrémens,
Sans être ni belle ni neuve,
En France on peut avoir le premier des amans,
La Pompadour en est la preuve."[2]

I was far from believing these verses would be discovered, and I had learned by this time to disguise my handwriting. I was ignorant that one of the most rigid and best executed orders of the Bastille was to examine leaf by leaf, with scrupulous exactness, every book which had been in the hands of a prisoner. My jailers, on finding the one in which I had written the verses, took it immediately to the Governor. This man, named Jean Lebel, could easily have suppressed the circumstance, in pity to an unhappy wretch whose misfortunes had blinded him to the consequences of his imprudence: the slightest feeling of humanity would have prompted him to this —but how could such a sentiment be expected in a governor

[2] "Without wit or accomplishments, without either beauty or chastity, the first lover in France (alluding to the King) may be won. Behold a proof of this in Pompadour!"

of the Bastille, whose situation, forcing him to become an accomplice in all the atrocities committed there, must of necessity render his character insensible and ferocious! What honorable or generous mind could endure through life the unvarying spectacle of human suffering? Jean Lebel, worthy in every respect of his employment, in carrying this book to Madame de Pompadour, sought at her hands the reward of his zeal and fidelity. Doubtless he was not sorry to prolong the term of my imprisonment. Interested in increasing the number of their captives, he and his colleagues adopted every means in their power to retain all who were committed to their charge.

From what I have already said of the character of the Marchioness de Pompadour, her fury may easily be conceived when the verses were shown to her. In chains, overwhelmed by her hate and vengeance, I still dared to brave and insult her. She sent for Monsieur Berryer, and, stammering with passion, "Learn to know your *protégé,* and dare again to solicit my clemency!"

It will not be supposed that this event diminished the horror of my situation; but, as that could scarcely be augmented, it served only to prolong my misery. I remained eighteen months longer in the dungeon, at the expiration of which time Monsieur Berryer ventured to take upon himself the responsibility of removing me to a more commodious apartment. He offered to procure me also, what in this terrestrial hell was indeed a powerful consolation, the attendance of a domestic. I have stated before, that the jailers never reply to the questions of the prisoners; their aspect is always sullen, and their tongues frozen; they are expressly forbidden to speak, except indeed when the object is to deceive the unfortunate captive, and then their words are prescribed to them, and every sentence includes a treacherous falsehood. During the walks, when one is fortunate enough to obtain that privilege, no object meets the eye but the gloomy figure of the turnkey. It is therefore a truly valuable indulgence to have, in the same apartment, another being to whom we can speak of our sufferings and confide our sorrows. He who could find in a faithful and intelligent domestic a consoling friend, would taste indeed a high enjoyment. I experienced the contrary;

and that from which I expected to derive some alleviation inflicted on me, in the end, only an additional torment.

I gladly availed myself of the generous offer of Monsieur Berryer. My unfortunate father, who bewailed my unhappy lot as bitterly as I did myself, would have sacrificed his all to relieve me. He consented joyfully to defray the wages and the pension of a servant. They selected a young man named Cochar, a native of Rosny, who might have proved to me all I was desirous of finding. He was gentle and compassionate—he wept with me over my misfortunes—he sympathized with me—he diminished my sufferings. My heart, by communion with a friend, was relieved from its intolerable oppression, and I began to feel less unhappy. But my consolation was soon removed from me. Poor Cochar could not long endure the tedium of captivity. He wept, he groaned, and at length fell sick. When a domestic enters the service of a prisoner in the Bastille, from that moment his fate is linked with that of his master: he can only obtain liberty with him, or die by his side within the walls of his dungeon. This unfortunate young man required nothing but fresh air to restore him to life; but our united prayers and lamentations could not obtain that boon from his assassins. They wished to harrow me with the appalling spectacle of his dying agonies, expiring close to me and for me; and they only removed him from my chamber when he was reduced to the last extremity. What is there to surpass this in the history of the Inquisition?

Reader, if you bestow the tear of pity on the fate of this unfortunate, reflect for a moment on mine. I was not more criminal than he was—he was the victim of his own cupidity—I, that of injustice and persecution. The feeling with which this idea inspired me still more agitated and tormented my soul. He had not liberty, it is true, but what else was he deprived of? His mind was calm, his feelings were composed. But I—bowed down beneath the overwhelming weight of hatred, every breath I drew seemed to increase my punishment, and each successive day I felt my very existence, as it were, wasting away by degrees. Yet *he* could only support this situation for three months, and *I* have endured it for thirty-five years! What do I say? this situation! Alas! those three months were the most tolerable of all I have passed

during my long imprisonment. Then, at least, I was not chained in a dismal cell, stretched on a pallet of straw, infected and rotten—obliged to dispute with loathsome reptiles a disgusting nourishment—my body devoured by vermin. But I pause—my mind gives way at the recollection, yet still I must endeavor to convey a faint description of the horrors I have gone through.

The fate of the unhappy Cochar quite overpowered me, and I was ready to sink beneath my sufferings. Monsieur Berryer, to relieve me, repeated the resource he had already tried. He obtained for me another companion—a young man of nearly my own age, full of talent, spirit, and activity—guilty of the same crime with myself, and suffering under the same persecution. He had written to the Marchioness de Pompadour. In his letter he detailed the odium in which she was held by the public, and pointed out the means by which she might recover their good opinion, and still retain the confidence of the King. Since the nation was tied to her chariot-wheels, he implored her to render herself worthy of its esteem. This young enthusiast, named d'Aligre, a native of Carpentras, had lamented for three years in the Bastille the misfortune of volunteering this advice. The haughty courtesan pursued him with a hatred as implacable as that she evinced towards me, and forced him to feel the same effects of her vengeance.

D'Aligre had also inspired a tender interest in the compassionate Berryer. We both assailed him with the same restless impatience; we overwhelmed him with letters and petitions, without abating his zeal in our behalf. He communicated to us all his proceedings, his efforts, and sometimes his hopes. At last he brought the appalling tidings that our persecutor, tired of our complaints and his importunity, had sworn that her vengeance should be eternal, and commanded him never again to mention our names. He frankly confessed to us his conviction that nothing but the disgrace or death of this incarnate demon could terminate our sufferings.

My companion yielded to his grief: mine produced in me an opposite effect—it gave me the courage and energy of despair. There remained but two alternatives, death or escape. To those who have the slightest idea of the situation of the Bastille, its enclosure, its towers, the system adopted there,

and the incredible precautions multiplied by despotism more surely to enchain its victims, the bare project, the simple notion of an escape, could only appear the offspring of madness, and excite pity for the unhappy wretch so senseless as to conceive it. I was, however, in perfect possession of my faculties, when I resolved on the attempt; and it will soon appear whether or not it required a strong mind and a clear head to meditate, arrange, and execute a similar project.

I pause here to recall to my readers the pledge I have given not to write a single sentence which shall deviate from the strictest truth. Whether they will believe themselves transported into another sphere, or attribute to me the powers of magic, I leave to their own imagination. For myself, I am about to relate nothing but simple facts.

It was out of the question to think for a moment of escaping from the Bastille by the gates. Every physical obstacle was united to render that impracticable. There remained no alternative but to attempt the *air*. In our chamber was a chimney, the tunnel of which came out on the summit of the tower; but, like those in the Bastille, it was filled with iron gratings, which in several places scarcely allowed a free passage to the smoke. Supposing we were arrived at the top of the tower, we had under us an abyss of two hundred feet. At the bottom was a ditch, commanded on the opposite side by a very high wall, which it was necessary to climb over. We were alone—without implements or materials—watched at every moment of the day and night—overlooked, besides, by a multitude of sentinels, who surrounded the Bastille, and appeared completely to invest it.

I was not disheartened by these accumulated obstacles and dangers. I communicated my ideas to my comrade; he looked upon me as a madman, and relapsed into his usual state of apathy. I was therefore obliged to trust entirely to myself; to meditate over my design alone; to calculate the appalling crowd of obstacles that opposed its execution, and ponder on the means of surmounting them. To accomplish this it was necessary to climb to the extreme summit of the chimney, in spite of the frequent gratings which impeded our progress. To descend from the top of the tower to the bottom of the ditch required a rope ladder of at least two hundred feet,

and a second ladder of wood to escape from the ditch. And, in case I could procure the necessary materials, I must conceal them from every eye, work without noise, deceive our numerous overseers, enchain their very senses, and, for many months, take from them the faculties of seeing and hearing. I must foresee, and check, the crowd of obstacles which every day, and every instant of the day, will each arise out of the other, to impede and counteract the execution of perhaps one of the boldest plans that ever the imagination conceived, or human industry achieved. Reader, I have done all this; and once more I swear I speak nothing but the truth.

I shall now commence the detail of my operations.

My first object was to discover a place where I could conceal from all observation our tools and materials, in case I should have the address to procure them. By dint of thought I arrived at a conclusion which seemed to me a very happy one. I had occupied several different chambers in the Bastille; and, whenever those immediately above and below me were also occupied, I could perfectly distinguish whatever noise was made in the one or the other. In the room in which we were now confined, I could hear all the movements of the prisoner who was above, but none of those of the prisoner in the apartment below; and I was quite certain that apartment was inhabited. I concluded, therefore, that our chamber had a double floor, with probably an interval between the two; and I took the following means of ascertaining the fact. There was a chapel in the Bastille, where Mass was celebrated once on every week-day, and three times on Sundays. In this chapel were four little cabinets, so arranged that those who were there were concealed from the priest, except only when a small curtain was drawn aside at the elevation of the Host.

Permission to attend Mass was an especial favor occasionally granted to the prisoners, and only to be obtained with great difficulty. Monsieur Berryer had procured this indulgence for us, and also for the prisoner who occupied the No. 3 chamber, the one immediately under ours. On returning from chapel I resolved to seize a moment before this prisoner was locked up again, and cast a hurried glance round his apartment. I explained to d'Aligre a method of assisting me. I

told him to put his toothpick-case in his pocket-handkerchief, and, when we should be on the second story, to draw out his handkerchief suddenly, to contrive so that the toothpick-case should fall to the bottom of the stairs, and to request the turnkey to go and pick it up for him. The name of this man is Daragon, and he is still alive.

This little plan succeeded to a miracle. While Daragon was looking for the toothpick-case, I ran quickly up to No. 3, I drew back the bolt of the door, and examined the height of the chamber from the floor: I found it did not exceed ten feet and a half. I re-closed the door, and from that chamber to ours I counted thirty-two stairs of nearly equal height. I measured one of them, and the result of my calculation convinced me that, between the floor of our room and the ceiling of that below, there must be an interval of five feet and a half, which could not be filled up with either stones or timber, on account of the enormous weight.

As soon as the door of our apartment was bolted on us and we were left alone, I threw myself on the neck of d'Aligre, intoxicated with confidence and hope, and embraced him with transport. "My friend," exclaimed I, "patience and courage, and we are saved!" I explained to him my calculations and conclusions. "We can conceal our ropes and materials—it is all I want," cried I—"we are saved!"

"How!" replied he—"you have not yet abandoned your dreams! Ropes! materials! where are they? where can we procure them?"

"Ropes!" exclaimed I—"we have more than we require: this trunk (showing him mine) contains more than a thousand feet of rope."

I spoke with animation, full of my idea, and transported with new hopes. I appeared to him possessed. He looked at me steadily, and, with the most touching tone of tender interest, "My friend," said he, "recall your senses, and subdue this wild delirium. Your trunk, you say, contains more than a thousand feet of rope: I know as well as you what it contains—there is not a single inch of rope!"

"How!" interrupted I, "have I not a vast quantity of linen—thirteen dozen and a half of shirts—many napkins, stockings, nightcaps, and other articles? Will not these supply

us? We will unravel them, and we shall have abundance of rope."[3]

D'Aligre, as if struck by a thunderbolt, penetrated at once the whole of my plan and my ideas. Hope and the love of liberty never become extinct in the heart of man, and they were only dormant in his. I soon inoculated him with my own ardor, but I had still to combat his host of objections, and dissipate his fears.

"With what," said he, "shall we wrench away these iron gratings which fill our chimney? where shall we find materials for the ladder of wood we require? where are the tools with which to commence our operations? We do not possess the happy art of creating them."

"My friend," replied I, "it is genius that creates, and we have that which despair supplies. It will direct our hands; and once more I tell you we shall be saved."

We had a folding table, supported by two iron hooks: we gave them an edge, by whetting them on the tiled floor. We converted the steel of our tinder-box, in less than two hours, into a tolerable pen-knife, with which we formed two handles to these hooks: their principal use would be to tear away the iron gratings from our chimney.

We were no sooner locked up for the night, than we commenced our operations. By means of our hooks, we raised some tiles of the floor, and, digging for about six hours, discovered, as I had conjectured, a vacant space of four feet

[3] Many people will here accuse me of exaggeration. They will scarcely believe an individual could possess such a quantity of linen, and will conclude I have assumed it, merely because it is necessary to the catastrophe of my fable. The English, particularly, have reasoned thus, when a detailed account of this escape appeared, some years ago, translated into their language. My estimable friend, the Chevalier de Pougens, who was at that time in London, has told me that he found it impossible to convert those with whom he had spoken on the subject. They denied the possibility of this fact, and on this ground maintained the falsehood of all the others. All this appears natural enough. The best furnished English wardrobe contains but little linen; it is nearly the same thing at Paris; but in the country they run into the contrary extreme. It is the common custom in families there, to accumulate enormous quantities of linen; and if it be remembered that I was educated there, and that my parents, in sending me from home, destined me to a long absence, it will easily be imagined that what I have stated may be true; particularly when I add, that I had bought a great deal of linen, at a very low price, at the plunder of Bergen op Zoom.

between the floor of our apartment and the ceiling of that below. We then replaced the tiles, which scarcely appeared to have been moved. These first operations completed, we ripped the seams and hems of two shirts, and drew out the threads one by one. We tied them together, and wound them on a number of small balls, which we afterwards rewound on two larger balls, each of which was composed of fifty threads, sixty feet long. We twisted them together, and formed a single cord of about fifty-five feet long, with which we constructed a rope ladder of twenty feet, intended to support us aloft in the chimney, while we forced out the bars and pointed iron with which it was defended.

This was the most irksome employment that can possibly be conceived, and demanded six months' incessant labor, the bare recollection of which makes me shudder. We could only pursue the work by bending and twisting our bodies in the most painful positions. An hour at a time was all we could bear, and we never came down without hands covered with blood. These iron bars were fastened with an extremely hard mortar, which we had no means of softening, but by blowing water with our mouths into the holes as we worked them. An idea may be formed of the difficulty of this work, when we were well pleased if in a whole night we had cleared away the eighth of an inch of this mortar. When we got a bar out, we replaced it in its hole, that, if we were inspected, the deficiency might not appear; and so as to enable us to take them all out at once, should we be in a situation to attempt our escape.

After dedicating six months to this obstinate and cruel labor, we applied ourselves to the wooden ladder, which was necessary to mount from the ditch upon the parapet, and from thence into the Governor's garden. This ladder required to be from twenty to twenty-five feet long. We devoted to this nearly all our fuel, which consisted of logs about eighteen or twenty inches long. We now found we should want blocks and pullies, and several other things, for which a saw was indispensable. I made one with an iron candlestick, by means of the steel of the tinder-box, from which we had constructed the pen-knife. With this piece of the steel, the saw, and the iron hooks, we chopped and hewed our logs;

we made our tenons and mortices in them, to joint them one into the other, with two holes through each to pass in the round, and two pegs to prevent swagging. We made the ladder with only one upright, through which we put twenty rounds, each of fifteen inches long. The upright was three inches in diameter, so that each round projected six inches clear on each side. To every piece of which the ladder was composed, the proper round was tied with a string, to enable us to put it together readily in the dark. As we completed each piece, we concealed it between the two floors. With the tools we had already made, we completed our workshop. We made a pair of compasses, a square, a carpenter's rule, &c., &c., and hid them carefully in our magazine.

The upper part of the building of the Bastille projects over the wall three or four feet: this would necessarily occasion our ladder to wave and swing about as we came down it, enough to turn the strongest head. To obviate this, and prevent our falling and being dashed to pieces in the descent, we made a second rope, three hundred and sixty feet long, to steady the person first descending. This rope was to be reeved through a kind of double block without sheaves, lest it should become jammed, or fixed between the sides and the wheel, and thus keep us suspended in the air, instead of assisting our descent.

Besides these, we constructed several other shorter ropes, to fasten our ladder to a cannon, and for any other unforeseen occasions. When all these ropes were finished, we measured them, and found they amounted to 1,400 feet. We then made two hundred and eight rounds for the rope and wooden ladders. To prevent the noise which the rounds would make against the wall during our descent, we covered them all with the linings of our morning gowns, waistcoats, and underwaistcoats. In all these preparations we employed eighteen months, but still they were incomplete.

We had provided means to get to the top of the tower, and from thence to the bottom of the ditch. To escape from the ditch, there were two methods. The first was, to climb up the parapet, from the parapet to the Governor's garden, and from thence to descend into the ditch of the Porte St. Antoine. But the parapet we had to cross was always well

furnished with sentinels. It is true, we might fix on a very dark and rainy night, when the sentinels did not go their rounds, and thus might escape their notice; but it might rain when we climbed up our chimney, and clear up at the very moment when we arrived at the parapet. We should then meet the Grand Rounds, who always carried lights; this would render it impossible to conceal ourselves, and we should be ruined forever.

The other plan increased our labors, but was the less dangerous of the two. It consisted in making a way through the wall which separated the ditch of the Bastille from that of the Porte St. Antoine. I considered that, in the numerous floods during which the Seine had caused this ditch to overflow, the water must have weakened the mortar, and rendered it less difficult to break through, and thus we should be enabled to force a passage. For this purpose, we should require an auger or gimlet, to make holes in the mortar, so as to enable us to insert the points of two of the iron bars to be taken out of our chimney, and with these to force out the stones. Accordingly, we made an auger with the hinge of one of our bedsteads, and fastened a handle to it in the form of a cross.

The reader who has followed us through the detail of these interesting occupations, participates no doubt in all the various feelings which agitated us, and, suspended between hope and fear, is equally anxious for the moment when we should attempt our flight.

We fixed on Wednesday, the 25th of February, 1756. The river had overflowed its banks; there were four feet of water in the ditch of the Bastille, and also in that of the Porte St. Antoine, by which latter we hoped to effect our deliverance. I filled a leathern portmanteau with a complete change of clothes for each of us, in case we were fortunate enough to escape. Our dinner was scarcely over, when we set up our great ladder of ropes, that is, we fastened the rounds to it, and hid it under our beds. We then arranged our wooden ladder in three pieces; we put our iron bars in their cases, to prevent their making a noise; and we packed up, besides, a bottle of brandy, to warm us, and keep up our strength, during nine hours that we might be obliged to work up to our necks in the water.

We then waited patiently till our supper was brought up, and the turnkeys locked us up for the night. I ascended the chimney first: I had the rheumatism in my left arm, but I thought little of the pain, for I soon experienced one much more severe. I had taken none of the precautions used by chimney-sweepers: I was nearly choked by the soot; and having no leathern guards on my knees and elbows, they soon became so excoriated that the blood ran down on my legs and hands. In this state I arrived at the top of the chimney. As soon as I got there, I let down a ball of twine with which I had provided myself. D'Aligre attached to this the end of the rope to which our portmanteau was fastened. I drew it up, untied it, and threw it on the platform of the Bastille. In the same way we hoisted up the wooden ladder, the two iron bars, and all our other articles; we finished by the ladder of ropes, the end of which I allowed to hand down, to aid d'Aligre in getting up, whilst I held the upper part by means of a large wooden peg which we had prepared on purpose. I passed it through the ropes, and placed it across the funnel of the chimney. By these means, my companion mounted much more easily than I had done. I then came down from the top of the chimney, where I had been in a very painful position, and both of us finally stood on the platform of the Bastille.

We now arranged all our different articles: we began by making a coil of our rope ladder, of about four feet diameter; we rolled it to the tower called *La Tour du Trésor,* which appeared the most favorable for our descent. We fastened one end of the ladder to a piece of cannon, and lowered it gently down the wall. Then we fastened the block, and passed the rope of 360 feet long through it: this rope I tied firmly round my body, and d'Aligre slackened it slowly, as I went down. Notwithstanding this precaution, I swung fearfully about in the air, at every step I made. The mere remembrance of my situation makes me shudder. At length I landed safely in the ditch, and d'Aligre immediately lowered the portmanteau and all our other effects. I fortunately found a dry spot, higher than the water which filled the ditch, and there I placed them. My companion then followed my example, and descended without accident; but he had an ad-

vantage over me, for I held the ladder with all my strength, and greatly prevented its swinging.

When we both found ourselves safe in the bottom of the ditch, we felt a momentary sensation of regret at not being able to carry away our rope ladder and other implements—rare and precious monuments of what human industry and exertion can achieve, when strongly inspired by the love of liberty.[4]

It did not rain, and we heard the sentinel marching up and down, at about six toises'[5] distance; we were therefore forced to give up our plan of escaping by the parapet and the Governor's garden, and resolved to use our iron bars. We crossed the ditch of the Bastille, straight over to the wall which divides it from that of the Porte St. Antoine, and went to work sturdily. Just at this point there was a small ditch of about six feet broad, and a foot and a half deep, which increased the depth of the water accordingly. Elsewhere it reached up to our middles, and here to our armpits. It had thawed only for a few days, and there was still floating ice in the water. We continued there nine hours, exhausted with fatigue and benumbed with the cold. We had scarcely begun our work, when I saw, about twelve feet over our heads, a patrol major, whose lanthorn exactly cast a light over the place we were in. We had no alternate but to put our heads under water as he passed, and this occurred several times during the night.

At length, after nine hours of incessant alarm and exertion,

[4] On the 16th of July, 1789, the day following the taking of the Bastille, I went there, and found, with a degree of pleasure I can scarcely describe, my rope and wooden ladders, and several others of the articles I have mentioned. They were shut up in a kind of secret closet, where they had been preserved as precious curiosities. There was a declaration attached to them, signed by Chevalier, Mayor of the Bastille, and Commissary Rochebrune, corroborating fully all the facts I have stated. I also found there letters from the ministers, and other documents concerning myself, of which I shall have occasion to speak in the course of these Memoirs. All these things were taken to the Assembly of the People, and given up to me, as a property to which I had acquired many just titles. They have since been publicly exhibited; and, at this moment, the rope ladder is in the hands of an individual who proposes taking it through all the principal towns of France and England, as one of the most glorious trophies that have been offered on the shrine of liberty.

[5] The French toise is two yards.

after having worked out the stones one by one, we succeeded in making, in a wall of four feet and a half thick, a hole sufficiently wide, and we both crept through. We were already giving way to our transport, when we fell into a danger we had not foreseen, and which had nearly proved fatal to us. In crossing the St. Antoine ditch, to get into the road to Bercy, we fell into the aqueduct. This aqueduct had ten feet of water over our heads, and two feet of mud at the bottom, which prevented our walking through to the opposite side, although it was only six feet across. D'Aligre fell on me, and had nearly thrown me down. Had that misfortune happened, we were lost; for neither of us possessed strength enough to get up again, and we must have been smothered. Finding myself laid hold of by d'Aligre, I gave him a violent blow with my fist, which made him let me go: at the same instant, throwing myself forward, I got out of the aqueduct. I then felt for d'Aligre, and, seizing hold of his hair, drew him to my side. We were soon out of the ditch, and, just as the clock struck five, found ourselves on the high road.

Penetrated by the same feeling, we threw ourselves into each other's arms; and, after a long embrace, we fell on our knees, to express our fervent gratitude to the Almighty, who had protected us through so many dangers. It is more easy to conceive than to describe our sensations.

The first duty fulfilled, we thought of changing our clothes; and we now saw the full advantage of having provided ourselves with the portmanteau. The long continuance in the wet had benumbed our limbs; and, as I had foreseen, we suffered much more from the cold now, than we had previously done during the nine consecutive hours when we were immersed in the water and floating ice. Neither of us retained strength enough to change his clothes without the assistance of the other.

We got into a hackney coach, and drove to the house of Monsieur Silhouette, Chancellor to the Duke of Orleans. I was very well acquainted with him, and felt sure of a kind reception. Unfortunately, he was at Versailles. We then sought shelter with an honest man who was equally well known to me: he was a tailor, of the name of Rouit, and a native of Digne, in Provence.

CHAPTER II

It was too much for the Marchioness de Pompadour to lose two victims at once; and, as the pleasure of tormenting us was so necessary to her existence, her fury must have exceeded all bounds on learning that we had escaped. She had also reason to tremble at our just resentment; we could now disclose to the public the cruelties she had inflicted on us, and all France would espouse our cause. She felt this, and never voluntarily restored to liberty a single victim who had once fallen within the scope of her revenge. I well knew she would employ every means in her power to discover our retreat: I was not again tempted to throw myself at her feet and implore her clemency, but I resolved at once to fly the country. At the first moment, the risk of this would have been too great; we therefore remained concealed for nearly a month, with the worthy man who had first received us, and then decided to depart separately, that, in case one should be discovered, the other might profit by his misfortune.

D'Aligre set out first, disguised as a peasant, and went to Brussels, where he arrived without any accident. He communicated to me his safety by a mode of correspondence we had previously arranged, and I immediately commenced my journey to rejoin him. I borrowed the parish register of my host, who was nearly my own age, and provided myself with the printed records and other documents of an old lawsuit, to supply a plausible pretext, in case I should be questioned as to the motives of my journey.

I assumed the dress of a servant, and set out by night from Paris, to wait at some leagues' distance for the arrival of the diligence to Valenciennes. One place on it was still unoccupied, which I immediately secured. During the journey, I was several times interrogated and searched by the horse police. I answered always that I was going to Amsterdam, to carry to my master's brother the documents with which I was furnished; and, by being constantly on my guard, I eluded the vigilance of all who were employed to arrest me. Sometimes, indeed, it was not easy to extricate myself. At Cambrai, the brigadier who interrogated me having asked me where I came from, and being answered from Digne, in

Provence, (the place named in the register of baptism I had borrowed,) said he had lived there for ten years. I saw he was about to commence a conversation that might be very troublesome, and preserved my self-command, so as to turn aside his suspicions. I anticipated him by some questions relative to the amusements of that place, and the proverbial gayety of its inhabitants; but, in spite of my address, I had enough to do to escape the danger, for my pretended countryman mentioned several persons so well known that it was not easy to be unacquainted with them.

My embarrassment reminded me of the fable of the dolphin, upon whose back an ape had saved himself from shipwreck in the neighborhood of Athens. The dolphin, entering into conversation with his companion, supposing him to be a man, asked him if he knew the Piræus (the celebrated Port of Athens). "Oh, yes!" cried the ape; "he is one of my most intimate friends—he and I have often cracked a bottle together." The dolphin upon this turned round in surprise, and seeing that he carried an ape, and not a man, plunged him at once into the sea.

I profited by this lesson, and, without making any direct reply, appeared as if I was endeavoring to remember the persons named by my interrogator, and was puzzled at not immediately knowing them. At last I said, "How long ago do you speak of?" "Eighteen years," said he. These words reassured me. I observed that I was then a mere child, and doubtless those persons were long since dead. He asked me many other questions, but fearing the result, I took the first opportunity of putting an end to our conference; and seeing the conductor of our diligence pass, I pretended business with him, and took a hasty leave of the brigadier.

Whilst I was thus lulling myself into a state of fancied security, my persecutors were plotting against me the most atrocious conspiracy. The French Ambassador degraded himself so far as to solicit, from the States of Holland, permission to arrest me; and that haughty Senate, intimidated by threats, or corrupted by a paltry sum of gold, consented.[1]

[1] I have since been informed, and I have seen the proofs of the fact, that the French Government paid for this purpose two hundred and seventeen thousand livres—about £9,000 sterling.

My actions were so well watched, that, in spite of the precaution of changing my name, and the address of my letters, they were all intercepted, and only one was suffered to reach me, which furnished the certain means of my recapture. They easily conceived that to arrest me in the house of Monsieur Clergue would have been attended with danger. He would have roused the public in my defense, and called on them to assist in rescuing me. To avoid this, they adopted the following plan. They allowed me to receive a letter from my father, enclosing a draft on Monsieur Marc Fraissinet, a banker at Amsterdam, payable on the 1st of June of the current year, 1756. On that day, they dogged my steps: and as I presented myself at the bank, at ten o'clock in the morning, I was arrested, bound, and dragged ignominiously through the assembled populace, who were easily persuaded that I was some notorious criminal. The crowd attracted by this spectacle soon became so great, that we were unable to proceed: the police officers who had charge of me, called *Dindres* [2] in that country, were armed with large bludgeons, with which they struck at all who impeded us, and honored me with an ample proportion of their favors to accelerate my pace. In this manner, they dragged me to the Town House. There we found such a multitude of idlers attracted by curiosity, that my escort could only make way by redoubling their blows; and I received one so violent, on the nape of my neck, that I fell senseless on the ground.

I am ignorant how long I remained in this state, or how I was conveyed from the Town House; but when I resumed my faculties, I found myself alone, lying on a truss of straw, in a dungeon without light. It appeared to me a frightful dream! My mind could scarcely compass the full horror of my situation. I was doomed once more to that appalling solitude, that death-like silence, which had so often prostrated my faculties; and I felt it more intolerable than ever—in my former sufferings, I had been sustained by hope, but now that last and precious consolation appeared to have deserted me.

About nine o'clock, I was visited by St. Marc, the French Exempt who had arrested me. This wretch came to add insult to misfortune, and tried to provoke me by vulgar irony. He

[2] Much the same thing as a bailiff's follower.

said I ought to pronounce the name of the Marchioness de Pompadour with the most profound respect; she was anxious only to load me with favors; far from complaining, I ought to kiss the generous hand that struck me, every blow from which was a compliment and an obligation. I regarded him as a common miscreant, too contemptible to excite reply.

In the meantime, Louis Clergue, and those of his friends who knew and felt convinced of my innocence, endeavored to excite the people in my favor: murmurs began to be heard, and the citizens demanded my liberty; they loudly accused the government of having violated, in my person, the law of nations and the rights of hospitality. I was struck with terror: lying completely at the mercy of my enemies, if they should be compelled to render an account of their conduct, it would be easy for them to assassinate me in prison, and give out that I had committed suicide to escape the ignominious punishment of the crimes I had been guilty of.

I was completely under the influence of this apprehension, when I received a second visit from the Exempt St. Marc: he congratulated me maliciously on the prospect of immediate deliverance, and then told me that, to make friends, he had brought me, as a present, an ounce of excellent tobacco. My suspicions may easily be conceived; they were perfectly natural, but I know not if they were well founded. I received his present, which in the first moment I considered as a blessing, believing that it contained the means of releasing me forever from the power of my persecutors; but different sentiments soon succeeded. Was it then possible that, in such a situation, existence still had charms, and is the love of life so strong, that nothing can extinguish it? I flung the tobacco away, and persuaded myself that I saw in everything proofs of the intended assassination. The following morning, I thought I traced surprise in the countenance of my jailer when he entered my cell.

The day after, I underwent a scene still more cruel. About eight o'clock in the evening I heard a noise, and perceived, through the grated window of my dungeon, eight or ten persons, some of whom carried lanthorns, and the rest bars of pointed iron and large sledge hammers. The door opened, and they surrounded me without speaking. I endeavored to

divine from their instruments what was to be the nature of my punishment, and the office of each of these executioners. For some time they looked at me attentively, still preserving profound silence. "Well," cried I, "strike! I am prepared for your blows!" They answered nothing, but proceeded to examine the walls of my dungeon. I thought they were searching for a convenient place, to drive a nail and fix a cord. Some of them tried, with their iron bars, whether any stones had been loosened, while others struck against the grated window with their hammers. This operation concluded, they all went out as they had entered, without speaking a single word. I afterwards ascertained that this was the regular prison visit, according to the custom of that country.

In the morning, I was taken from the prison, and we continued our journey. St. Marc seated himself by my side in the carriage, having first taken the precaution of placing irons on my legs. He was armed with pistols, and the same weapons were carried by his servant, who ran by the side of the vehicle, and had orders to shoot me through the head if I attempted the slightest motion whatever. In this manner, at ten o'clock on the morning of the following day, we reached the Bastille.

St. Marc was received as a benevolent divinity; all the officers of the Castle came out to meet him, to enhance by their attendance the imposing dignity of his arrival. They congratulated and embraced him; he boasted of the difficulties he had encountered, and the brilliant success of his expedition; they sympathized with his fatigues, and every one seemed anxious, by some delicate attention to reward and distinguish him. For me, I was stripped of my clothes, as on the former occasion,—covered with rags, half rotten,—chained hand and foot,—and then thrown again into a dungeon with a few handfuls of straw. My jailers were the same whose vigilance I had deceived before, and who had been punished by three months' imprisonment, for the crime of not having prevented my escape.

I shall not harass the imagination of my readers, by a fresh detail of all I underwent in this frightful situation; they will easily conceive it, without my attempting to weary their sensibility. During three years and five months, I remained in

chains, a prey to all the horrors of my fate, and abandoned to the tyranny of my persecutors. I shall detail, in another place, the declaration of a surgeon who was ordered to visit me and report on my condition. His recital of what I had suffered will make the reader shudder.

I have said enough at present of tortures and executioners; let me now mention the alleviations I found, even in this loathsome dungeon. Yes—desperate and hopeless as my situation appeared, I still found something to console and cheer me. Shut out from all communion with mankind, persecuted and abandoned by my own species, I found solace in the company of animals, and those too which are generally considered as among the lowest and most revolting of their species. I amused myself with mingling in their pursuits, and forcing them to become attached to me.

For a long time I had enumerated amongst my greatest annoyances the presence of a crowd of rats, who came continually hunting for food and lodging in my straw. Sometimes, when I was asleep, they ran across my face and more than once by biting me severely, occasioned the most acute suffering. Unable to get rid of them, and forced to live in their society I conceived the idea of forming a friendship with them. They soon condescended to receive me, and I owe to them the only agreeable relaxation I have experienced during the thirty-five years of my captivity. Let me describe the progress of this interesting fellowship.

The dungeons of the Bastille are octagonal: the one where I was now confined had a loop-hole, two feet and a half above the floor. On the inside it was two feet long and about eighteen inches wide; but it gradually diminished towards the exterior, so that on the outside wall it scarcely exceeded three inches in size. From this loop-hole alone I derived the only light and air I was permitted to enjoy: the stone which formed the base of it, served me also for chair and table. When, tired of reclining on a foul and infected pallet, I dragged myself to the loop-hole to breathe a little fresh air, to lighten the weight of my chains I rested my elbow and arms on this horizontal stone. Being one day in this attitude, I saw a large rat appear at the other extremity of the loop-hole; I called him to me; he looked at me, without showing any

fear; I gently threw him a piece of bread, taking care not to frighten him away by violent action. He approached,—took the bread,—went to a little distance to eat it, and appeared to ask for a second piece: I flung him another but at less distance; a third, nearer still, and so on by degrees. This continued as long as I had bread to give him; for after satisfying his appetite, he carried off to a hole the fragments he had not devoured. The following day, he came again. I treated him with the same generosity, and added even a morsel of meat, which he appeared to find more palatable than the bread; for this time he ate in my presence, which before he had not done. The third day he became sufficiently familiar to take what I offered him from my fingers.

I have no idea where his dwelling-place was before, but he appeared inclined to change it, to approach nearer to me; he discovered, on each side of the window, a hole sufficiently large for his purpose; he examined them both, and fixed his abode in the one to the right, which appeared to him the most convenient. On the fifth day, for the first time, he came to sleep there. The following morning, he paid me a very early visit: I gave him his breakfast; when he had eaten heartily, he left me and I saw him no more till the next day, when he came according to custom. I saw, as soon as he issued from his hole, that he was not alone. I observed a female rat peeping from it, and apparently watching our proceedings. I tried to entice her out, by throwing her bread and meat; she seemed much more timid than the other, and for some time refused to take them; however, at last she ventured out of the hole by degrees, and seized what I threw half-way towards her. Sometime she quarreled with the male, and, when she proved either stronger, or more skilful, ran back to the hole, carrying with her what she had taken. When this happened, the male rat crept close up to me for consolation, and, to revenge himself on the other, ate what I gave him too far from the hole for her to venture to dispute it with him, but always pretending to exhibit his prize as if in bravado. He would then seat himself on his haunches, holding the bread or meat between his fore-paws like a monkey, and nibbling it with an air of defiance.

One day, the pride of the female conquered her shyness.

She sprang out, and seized between her teeth the morsel which the other was beginning to munch. Neither would let go, and they rolled over each other to the hole, into which the female, who was the nearest to it, dragged the male after her. This extraordinary spectacle relieved, by contrast, the monotony of my ordinary sufferings and recollections. In the bustle of the world, it is difficult to conceive the pleasure I derived from such a trifling source, but there are sensitive minds who will readily understand it.

When my dinner was brought in, I called my companions: the male ran to me directly; the female, according to custom, came slowly and timidly, but at length approached close to me, and ventured to take what I offered her from my hand. Some time after, a third appeared, who was much less ceremonious than my first acquaintances. After his second visit, he constituted himself one of the family, and made himself so perfectly at home, that he resolved to introduce his comrades. The next day, he came, accompanied by two others, who in the course of the week brought five more; and thus, in less than a fortnight, our family circle consisted of ten large rats and myself. I gave each of them names, which they learned to distinguish. When I called them, they came to eat with me, from the dish, or off the same plate; but I found this unpleasant, and was soon forced to find them a dish for themselves, on account of their slovenly habits. They became so tame, that they allowed me to scratch their necks, and appeared pleased when I did so; but they would never permit me to touch them on the back. Sometimes I amused myself with making them play, and joining in their gambols. Occasionally I threw them a piece of meat, scalding hot: the most eager ran to seize it, burned themselves, cried out, and left it; whilst the less greedy, who had waited patiently, took it when it was cold, and escaped into a corner, where they divided their prize: sometimes I made them jump up, by holding a piece of bread or meat suspended in the air.

A short time after this, the Governor of the Bastille was changed, which produced also an alteration in our lot. The Count de Jumilhac, formed to do honor to his office, was both generous and compassionate; he directed his attention to his prisoners, and solely with the view of diminishing their suf-

ferings. He appeared touched with mine, and promised me his protection. He was not one of those who confine themselves to words, but he did even more than he had promised. He procured me an audience with M. de Sartine, who was at that time Lieutenant of Police. He now makes his first appearance on the scene, and henceforward will play an important part in the history of my life. He listened attentively to the long detail I entered into; my military project, above all, appeared to strike him; he assured me that, as soon as I recovered my liberty, he would use means to obtain for me the just reward of my services; he pledged me his word of honor to this effect, in the presence of the Governor, of M. Ferrant, Lieutenant of the King, and of M. Chevalier, Major of the Bastille, the last of whom is still alive. He gave permission also that I should walk every day for two hours on the top of the towers, or rather on the platform of the Bastille. My feelings towards this magistrate have experienced the exact gradation of his conduct towards myself. At this moment he procured for me the indulgence I have mentioned. He appeared in some degree interested in me; I felt grateful in return, and endeavored to prove it by submitting to his observation two new plans I had conceived.

The first was on the subject of finance. At that time, as at present, the public revenue was exhausted and in confusion, and ready money was totally wanting. How proud I ought to feel at present, when I find the basis of my plan is the same which has lately been decided on by a decree of the National Assembly! They have legalized and sanctioned the temporary establishment of a paper currency. I proposed that a coinage which should answer the same end, be destined to the same service, and be called in by the same means. The objections opposed to me were similar to those which have been urged against the new establishment: I answered them by the same arguments with which the Assembly have supported their system. My plan has been read by a number of distinguished persons, who can attest the fact of its having been written at the time I speak of.

The object of my second project (the details of which were forcibly taken from me by Commissary Chesnon, on the 17th of July, 1777), was to establish public granaries, to do away

with all the evils incidental to the idea of famine. Nothing could be more simple than the mode I suggested of constructing and provisioning these magazines. It consisted in a slight duty upon marriage, which all rich people, or those who wished to appear so, would have paid with eagerness, as I had the address to found it on their vanity. It is difficult to conceive the important results I have arrived at, from the most natural and simple calculations. I pointed out the certain means of placing every province of France, every city, every town and every village, beyond the fear of famine, in case of a scarcity of corn. How much should we have been indebted to similar institutions, at this time particularly, when our enemies have tried to starve us, and to render useless the blessings of nature, by forcing the people, in the fury of despair, to destroy the certainty of their future subsistence! If it were necessary to prove the great advantages of public granaries, we should find them in the history of a little state, since become one of our provinces.

Lorraine was formerly indebted for an establishment of this nature to a benevolent sovereign who had found time to render his territory happy. With a good administration, and a trifling revenue, he had been able, within a very short space of time, to place the province in a state of subsistence during several years of scarcity. After the death of Stanislaus, these magazines were destroyed, and Lorraine experienced the horrors of famine. This public crime was committed by the Intendant of the province,[3] and the superior tribunal, who became accomplices in the mischief, by having the meanness to permit it.

Some time after I had transmitted to Monsieur de Sartine the two memorials containing my new projects, Monsieur Falconet, Aide-Major of the Bastille, did me the honor to visit me in my prison, and said to me in direct terms, "If Monsieur de Sartine was to settle on you a pension of fifteen hun-

[3] Monsieur de la Galazière, at present Intendant of Alsace. The Editor of these Memoirs pledges himself for the authenticity of this fact. He ascertained it in the capital of Lorraine, his native country, where he has resided till the present time: in his youth, he ventured to disclose the truth, in an eulogium on the Sully of the province, but was compelled to be silent. Now, that he is allowed to speak freely, he gratifies the desire he has always felt of exposing tyranny and oppression.

dred francs, well paid and secured, would you give up your project of the public granaries?" My head being full of my own plans, and excited by this question, I answered immediately, without reflection, that for 50,000 crowns in ready money I would not give up the honor of having proposed it.

"Nevertheless," replied the Aide-Major, "if I were in your situation, I should think myself too happy to receive such an offer."

"I can readily believe it," retorted I instantly, affecting the Alexander; "and if I were Falconet, I would accept it eagerly."

As soon as he was gone, I reflected on the absurdity of my answer, which might lead to unpleasant consequences. To prevent these, if possible, I requested another interview with Father Griffet, with whose conduct to me on the former occasion I had every reason to be satisfied. I mentioned this conversation to him, and he coincided entirely with my own ideas. "You have been long enough in the Bastille," said he, "to know it thoroughly. Doubtless this officer has been sent to you by Monsieur de Sartine: whatever may be his motives, your refusal and more particularly the manner in which you have couched it, will incense him against you; and I fear you will have cause to repent." However, I heard nothing further from Monsieur de Sartine, either on this point or on the subject of the services he had volunteered.

Annoyed by his silence, I addressed various letters and petitions to him, all which remained unanswered. At last, I enclosed in an envelope the twenty-four letters of the alphabet, and entreated him to arrange them into such words as should soften him towards me, and remind him of his promises. It will easily be conceived that this, as well as the other letters, remained unanswered; but my situation continued unchanged, and I was still permitted to retain the indulgences he had granted me. Amongst them was the privilege of walking on the towers. This was a favor granted only to prisoners of a certain rank: those of the lower order, the members of the third estate, were confined to the courts, from whence there was no view whatever, whilst from the platform of the towers we could see the whole of the rich basin in the midst of which Paris is situated.

My mind, for a long time lost in a crowd of torturing reflections, roused itself one day, as a ray of hope burst suddenly through the gloom. It has been seen how eagerly I seized upon the slightest contingency that appeared to favor the possibility of escape. I perceived, on calculating the distance, that it was possible to throw a packet from the top of the tower on which I was walking into the Rue St. Antoine; but this first step, in my new project, was far indeed from its ultimate success. Something written must be enclosed in the packet, and I was without pens, ink, or paper. And how could I govern the chance, which alone could bring into the street, exactly opposite to me, and at the moment when I threw down the packet, a person sufficiently humane or honest to feel an interest in the fate of an imprisoned stranger, endowed with compassion to assist him, and bold enough to brave his enemies. It was also necessary once more to deceive the vigilance of my keepers, who, having learned to mistrust me, never suffered me out of their sight for a single moment. But I have already shown that I could surmount obstacles, and at present I saw none to discourage me.

My first effort was to free myself from the companions of my walks. They were, usually, Monsieur Falconet, whom I have already mentioned, and a sergeant of the Guards, belonging to the Bastille. Falconet was a person who merited little respect; he was even inferior to his situation, which was scarcely above the very lowest class. One of his lesser faults was that of being an incessant talker. Whilst in attendance on a prisoner, he entertained him with a recital of the splendid actions that illustrated his own glory. It was difficult to get rid of him, and more so to cure him of this constant mania of panegyrizing himself. I adopted the plan of contradicting him at every sentence, of denying every fact he advanced, and of provoking him by sarcastic replies. This succeeded admirably. He always broke from me in a passion, and at length sentenced himself to perpetual silence whenever we were together. But this was not all. It was equally requisite to tire him of the habit of watching my motions, which I found most difficult. He was then in the strict line of his duty, and, as I had checked his talking propensities, he could find no better occupation than performing it. Still, I hit upon a

method which answered my purpose; it was to walk at a very rapid pace, and almost to run, during our daily promenades. The first time, he endeavored to prevent me. "Don't walk so quick," said he. "Don't you walk so slow," replied I: "I am not here to accommodate you, but you are placed to watch *me:* my infirmities render perspiration desirable, and I endeavor to produce it by rapid motion."

He was obliged to give in: by degrees he became accustomed to it, and suffered me to run or jump along as I pleased. He took his own pace, and, as he could no longer converse with me, consoled himself by gossiping with my other keeper, at the same time allowing me to pass on to the opposite extremity of the platform. I sometimes remained there a full quarter of an hour, whilst, in the heat of argument, they lost sight of me altogether.

Having thus succeeded in my preliminary operations, I tried to fix on some one who might be able and willing to hear me, and whose external appearance, as I had no other means of judging, would be such as to inspire confidence, and encourage me to disclose the secret of my life. From the top of the platform I could see perfectly into the different apartments of the houses that surrounded the Bastille; I endeavored to distinguish the persons that occupied them; and, above all, for the execution of my project, I sought for women, and I wished to find them young and pretty. Their gentle souls are then more susceptible of pity, more easily touched by misfortunes. Their sensibility is more active, and more capable of generous efforts. Nature impresses these truths upon us: I felt their power, but I had not then learned them from experience. How deeply have they since been engraved upon my heart, and how much am I indebted to the heroic woman who burst the chains that had so long encircled me; who, without knowing me, and upon the mere recital of my injuries, herself without friends, protectors, fortune or any guide but her heart, succeeded by defeating my enemies, and hesitated not to brave their utmost vengeance!

A fortunate chance assisted me even beyond my hopes. I remarked two young women at work, in a room by themselves; their countenances appeared gentle and attractive, and I was not deceived. One of them happening to look

towards me, I saluted her respectfully with my hand; she apprised her sister, who also turned round; I then saluted them both in the same manner, which they answered immediately with an air of interest and good nature. From this moment, we commenced a regular correspondence. Every day I repeated my visit; they were punctual at the rendezvous, appeared perfectly to understand my signs, and acquainted me, by theirs, in the most expressive manner, that they were anxious to render me any service in their power. I showed them a packet, which they wished me to fling to them; I made them comprehend that it was not yet ready, but that in a very little time I should have another one to send to them.

I waited with the most intense anxiety for the moment when I should again behold my protectors. On the following day they appeared at their window as usual, and made many signals to me, which I tried in vain to comprehend; all I could discover was, that they assumed an air of satisfaction, in which evidently *I* alone was concerned; on each succeeding day they appeared more animated and anxious: this intercourse continued for three months and a half, and still I could collect from it nothing new or conclusive. At last, on the 18th of April, 1764, at a quarter past nine in the morning, I saw them approach the window, and display a roll of paper, on which I read distinctly the following words in large characters: *The Marchioness de Pompadour died yesterday, April the* 17*th,* 1764.

I thought I saw the heavens expand themselves. I never imagined that, after this event, I should remain in captivity even for a single day; I had committed no offense which could draw down on me the vengeance of the laws; my only crime was having excited the anger of this imperious woman. She was dead, and it was impossible her evil passions could survive her. Monsieur Berryer, and those who had ever taken an interest in my fate, had always said that her disgrace or death would terminate my misfortunes. I felt so certain of this, that I began to pack up my portmanteau, expecting every moment the order for my liberation. What was my astonishment, when several days passed over, and I still remained a prisoner! I wrote immediately to Monsieur de Sartine; I reminded him

that I had committed no crime, and had never been in the presence either of accuser or judge; that I had been detained in the Bastille by the orders of the Marchioness de Pompadour alone, and as her death had terminated her vengeance, it ought equally to put a period to my captivity.

All the officers of the Bastille, the turnkeys, and every one attached to the establishment, had received the most rigorous orders to conceal from the prisoners the death of the Marchioness; the Lieutenant of Police, therefore, was surprised beyond measure, when he read my letter. He hastened instantly to the prison, ordered me to be brought before him, and demanded with severity from whom, and through what channel, I had received my intelligence. This questior and the tone in which it was put, convinced me at once that I should bring danger on those who had informed me, if I were weak enough to name them. I replied to Monsieur de Sartine, that the importance he attached to the matter, enabled me to perceive the motives he was actuated by; and, well knowing what would be the consequences of my confession, he should tear out my entrails before he extracted it from me. He persevered, and had the baseness to say, "This avowal is the price of your liberty." I could no longer contain my indignation, but retorted, "that I thought I saw before me Mahomet II., who ripped open twelve pages, to discover which among them had swallowed five cyphers." He stammered in confusion, blushed, and went away, promising to *take care of me.*

I allowed several days to pass over, and hearing nothing, I wrote to him again; I overwhelmed him with petitions and remonstrances; as I could not soften him, I resolved to fatigue him with my importunities: he returned for answer, *that he had not forgotten me, and was laboring effectually in my cause.* The officer who brought me this message, emphasized strongly the word *effectually:* he had been present on several occasions, when M. de Sartine had promised to obtain for me the just reward to which my services had entitled me. I took up my pen again, and wrote to M. de Sartine, that if it was necessary by a few more days' imprisonment to purchase the certainty of a reward, I would formally renounce all claim to it; *and that, if I were to receive a hundred thousand crowns at the*

expiration of six months' further captivity, it would be paying too dearly to buy the treasure at that price; that the only favor I solicited was the justice to which I had so many claims; that I renounced everything, and pardoned all, provided they would only on the instant restore me to liberty. To this letter I received no answer.

It is in situations such as this that time lingers on with agonizing slowness: what state can be more dreadful than that in which the mind, tortured and agitated alternately by suspense, impatience, hope, and despair, loses itself in a labyrinth of perplexity, and becomes confounded in its own emotions. The officers of the Bastille themselves appeared to feel for me, and, perhaps for the first time in their lives, experienced emotions of pity. One of them hinted to me that the heirs of the Marchioness, dreading the just claims of the many victims of her hatred, had probably purchased the silence of the Ministers, who had the power of stifling the complaints of the prisoners. This suggestion recalled to my mind the positive orders given to conceal the death of the Marchioness, the rage of M. de Sartine on learning that I was acquainted with it, his menaces to tear my secret from me, and the singular conduct he had since pursued. These reflections increased my despair; I thought myself irretrievably lost, and fancied I beheld a new conspiracy winding round me, more terrible than the former one. I was then the victim of an angry woman; I was about to become that of a venal Minister: the first, founded on headlong passion, might have exhausted itself; the latter, built on selfish calculation, was likely to last forever. Tortured and exasperated by these ideas, my reason gave way to the madness that possessed me: I vented the emotions of my soul on paper, and forwarded to M. de Sartine what I had written. I had found it impossible to move his pity, or make him feel; I resolved, if I could, to enrage him, and force him with his own hand to terminate my miseries: but this new crime demanded some sort of energy, and of that he was incapable.

Prudent men will condemn me for this act of passion, and find in it, perhaps, a justification of the atrocious cruelties I groaned under; or they will probably account themselves generous, if, appealing to their sensibility, they excuse me on

the ground of compassion. Let these cold calculators learn to estimate the effect of bodily and mental suffering nourished by despair alone; let them remember that he who kisses with respect the hand of the tyrant that oppresses him, is a dastard undeserving pity, and that Socrates appears greater, because he dared to brave Anitus.

It was on the 27th of July, 1764, that I forwarded this letter. A generous tyrant (and even tyrants sometimes can be generous) would have been struck on reading it; he would have blushed for himself, and pardoned the writer. Monsieur de Sartine ordered me to be thrown again into a common dungeon. This was his only answer, and it was worthy of him. I remained on bread and water till the 14th of August following. He began to reflect that the officers of the Bastille, aware of the promises he had formerly made me and witnesses of his present conduct, would easily divine his motives; and in imitation of other despots, who while they practice vices assume the semblance of virtue, he circulated through the Castle the report that he was disposed to restore me to liberty; but, to accustom me by degrees to a change of air, he was going to place me for a few months in a convent of monks. In consequence of this, I was taken out of my dungeon during the night of the 14th or 15th of August, 1764; I was loaded with irons of every description, and, under the custody of an Exempt named Rouillier, attended by two assistants, was conveyed into a hackney coach. A scene of cold, reflecting cruelty was now preparing for me, surpassing in atrocity any I have yet detailed.

My keepers fastened an iron chain round my neck, the end of which they fastened under the bend of my knees; one of them placed one hand upon my mouth and the other behind my head, whilst his companion pulled the chain with all his might, and thus completely bent me double. The pain I suffered was so intense, that I thought my loins and spine were crushed; I have no doubt it equaled that endured by the wretch who is broken on the wheel. In this state I was conveyed from the Bastille to Vincennes. Monsieur de Sartine must have been well satisfied with the manner in which his executioners obeyed his orders. To enjoy it still more, he made them give him an exact detail of all their pro-

ceedings: I have in my possession the written evidence of the Exempt Rouillier which describes them. . . .

I can form no idea how long I remained in this cell; I had no means of distinguishing the day from night; my imagination was the only guide by which I could calculate the circulation of time. It would certainly have become my tomb, and I should soon have been effectually *forgotten* there, but for the humanity of my jailers. I felt my death approach; it had little terror for me, but its slow advances were intolerable. One day, when the turnkey brought the stale bread which for so many months had formed my sole subsistence, I rallied my strength to drag myself towards him; I grasped both his hands, and, with the feeble remnant of a choking voice, I said to him, "My friend, you are a man—you appear to have some sensibility; I have observed the tears ready to fall from your eyes at the sight of the torments I undergo; it is in your power to end them: choose between poison and your dagger—strike! I have still strength enough to tear out my own entrails; for mercy's sake, strike! but pity me, and may the consequences light on my inhuman butchers!" He replied only by tears, and left the dungeon.

In a few hours after, the surgeon entered; he found me in a dreadful state; I was prodigiously swelled; every part of my body retained the impression of a finger when applied to it; he saw that without prompt relief I should perish: but how could I receive assistance, or profit by remedies, in an infected cell, where I breathed nothing but poison, where the air entered only by the wicket which was opened for a moment as the turnkey passed in to attend me; in a place so damp, that the straw, which was its only furniture, was always rotten, where it was impossible to excite the slightest perspiration, or re-animate my senses, benumbed and rendered torpid by the cold; in a place so contracted, that, I had no room to move, or assume any other position than that of lying on the ground in the midst of the filth that surrounded me! The surgeon, whose name was Fontailiau, shocked at what he beheld, declared at once that it was necessary to remove me to a habitable chamber. But how was the order for this transfer to be obtained? The Governor, when pressed to make application to M. de Sartine, refused in the most determined

manner. "His hatred," said he, "is terrible; and to solicit a favor for this unfortunate wretch, is to increase it: apply to the Physician-general." But the surgeon remarked that the Physician-general was in attendance on the King, and to apply to him required time, during which I should inevitably perish; he could not assure my life for four-and-twenty hours longer, if I continued in that filthy den.

I know not what means were adopted; but, three hours after, all the turnkeys came to my cell, placed me on their shoulders, and carried me to the first chamber on the left, at the entrance of the keep. By degrees, the fever left me, but the swelling remained undiminished. I thought of prescribing for myself; I took secretly some hot wine mixed with a great quantity of sugar, and I found it a very efficacious remedy. My pores began to open, my strength returned, and I perspired profusely; I acquainted the surgeon with what I had done; he approved of it; and in less than two months and a half, by persevering in the occasional use of this panacea, the inflammation entirely subsided.

What further expedients could I find within myself? I had effected three escapes, each of which might pass for a kind of miracle, and I could scarcely expect new ones to arise in my favor; I lost myself in a crowd of calculations; my mind, continually falling back upon its own resources, returned perpetually to the same point. Nevertheless, I thought I had discovered a means of diminishing in some degree the monotony of my existence, and, by forming useful acquaintances, of making friends who one day or other might be of service to me. This was to establish a correspondence with all the other prisoners, without leaving my chamber, where I was watched with the most minute attention. This project was not easy of execution; but it sufficed for me that it was not impossible and I resolved to undertake it. To accomplish this enterprise, it was necessary to pierce through the enormous wall of the Donjon or Keep of Vincennes, on the side of the garden, where all the other prisoners were allowed to take the air. For this purpose I had only my bare hands. I recollected perfectly that, in the preceding year, during one of my walks in the garden, I had picked up a piece of an old sword, and the iron hoop of a bucket,

which fell accidentally in my way, and had concealed them carefully, in case they might at any future time become necessary to me. But they were in the garden, and the world would not have bribed the officers of the Château again to let me walk there, after having twice escaped with such address from their custody.

I had remarked that, when any repairs were necessary in the apartment of a prisoner, the occupant was always removed from his chamber while the work was going on, and, when that was only of a temporary nature, he was generally taken to the garden. To oblige my jailers to remove me from the room, I broke two panes of glass in my window, and took care to pretend an accident which occasioned this clumsiness; it excited no surprise, and all happened as I anticipated. The next day, a glazier was sent; whilst he was mending the window, I was taken to the garden, and left alone, with the door double-bolted on me. I ran quickly to the place where I had concealed the two articles I sought for; I found them readily: the piece of the sword I put in my breeches-pocket, and the hoop of iron round my body under my shirt. As soon as the panes of glass were repaired, they came to take me back to my apartment, which I reëntered with an air of the most perfect tranquillity: I was quite satisfied, and my mind fully occupied in reflecting how I should employ my newly acquired implements.

The walls of the keep were at least five feet thick; my iron rod was scarcely three in length: I contrived to give it a point, and it answered the purpose of piercing the walls, but was too short to penetrate to the end, and pass entirely through. I shall not enter into the detail of all the efforts I made to accomplish this object, the incredible difficulties I had to surmount, and the pain I suffered, in my endeavors to perforate the wall: it is sufficient to say, that I employed in the attempt the space of twenty-six months, during which I abandoned and re-commenced my enterprise a hundred times; I put in practice every resource which my knowledge of mathematics could supply, and which more than once I had availed myself of before; and I invoked the genius of liberty, who continually inflamed my imagination. At last, I achieved my point. This hole is still in existence in the

Donjon; four years ago, I showed it to Monsieur le Maréchal Prince de Beauveau: the mechanic, who can appreciate the incomprehensible difficulties of this labor, will regard it, perhaps, as a *chef d'œuvre* of human industry. The hole is in the chimney, in a place which the shadow of the mantelpiece somewhat darkened; and which I selected as being the least likely to be observed, in the frequent visits of inspection made to the apartments of the different prisoners. I constructed with plaster and sand a species of mortar, with which I made a cork or stopper. It closed the hole so hermetically, that, let the wall be examined with what minuteness it might, no suspicion could possibly arise. I passed into the hole a long peg, which I could draw out when I pleased, and which was somewhat shorter than the entire extent of the opening: if any one in the garden observed the aperture (which I had made extremely small at that end,) on sounding the hole they could only find a depth of two or three inches, and there would be nothing suspicious in its appearance.

This great undertaking being accomplished, I tied together several pieces of wood, with some twine, made, as on a former occasion, from the materials of my shirts and sheets, and thus constructed a stick of six feet long. I knew exactly the time of taking the prisoners to the garden, besides which I could see the door through the iron gratings of my window: it was always open when no one was walking there, and fastened whenever a prisoner was brought and left by himself.

Having prepared everything as I have already related, I took advantage of the first moment when I saw a prisoner walking alone. I passed my stick through the aperture, with a riband tied to the end of it, which soon attracted his attention; he approached, examined it, and laid hold of the stick, which I had pushed beyond the outer face of the wall, and pulled it towards him: I held it firmly on my side; he felt the resistance, and, not conceiving it possible that a prisoner could have perforated the wall of his apartment, he was completely puzzled at the circumstance. I called out to him to come nearer. "Is it the devil," cried he, "who is speaking to me?" I calmed his fears, and told him my situation.

He informed me, in his turn, that he was called the Baron de Venac, a Captain in the regiment of Picardy, and son of the Count de Beluse; a native also of Saint-Chély, from precisely the same country as myself. The similarity, too, of our misfortunes, which arose from the same cause, was an additional motive for our mutual inclination to become acquainted. During nineteen years he had expiated in prison the crime of having given advice to the Marchioness de Pompadour, which, while it concerned her existence, was humiliating to her pride. We arranged a plan by which we might continue our intercourse for the future; and by similar means, I established an acquaintance with nearly all the prisoners in the Castle.

Amongst the prisoners, the one who became most attached to me was a certain M. Tiercelin, Count de la Roche Dumaine. He had two sons in the service, and two daughters, the eldest of whom he had placed in the Abbey of Saint Antoine at Paris. He was living on one of his estates called La Grange-Chancel, a name long famous in the annals of despotism. He was informed that his eldest daughter had been unfortunate enough to attract the notice of the monarch, who had elevated her to the rank of one of his mistresses; he could scarcely believe the dishonor of his family; he flew to the Abbey, and demanded his daughter; they could give him no account of her: he hastened to Versailles, and addressed himself to Lebel, the King's valet de chambre, who replied that he knew nothing of her. This unhappy father, compelled to bury his grief and shame in his own bosom, dared not to engage others to assist in his search for his child. One day, he thought he perceived her in a sedan; he approached, opened the door, recognized his daughter, and ordered her to follow him. I neither blame nor justify the conduct of this man: he yielded to a disgrace which he could not prevent, and I believe profited by the circumstance to promote the interest of his other children. However, he never lived with his daughter, but took a lodging in Paris, where she often visited him, when he was unable to go to her at Versailles.

A Jesuit, who wished to be introduced to Mademoiselle Tiercelin, began by cultivating an intimacy with her father, who presented him to his daughter, at the same time strongly

recommending him to her favor: this was all he desired. He was an adept in all the polished vices which render men agreeable and seductive; he wished to please, and, from long practice, was acquainted with the means of attaining his object. He soon succeeded with the young lady, and shared her confidence and affection with her august protector. But the presence of the father annoyed him; he dreaded his experience, and the influence he possessed over the mind of his daughter; he persuaded her that her father was a dangerous and importunate adviser, whose remonstrances interfered with her happiness and disturbed her tranquillity, and induced her to solicit from the Duke de la Vrillière an order for his imprisonment. She could have obtained a thousand such orders from the Minister in so legitimate a cause.

The unfortunate old man was seized by an inspector of police named Desmarais, and sent to the Fortress of St. Yon at Rouen, with the most positive orders that the means of writing letters should be strictly withheld from him. This recital will excite the indignation of all who read it, but it is not yet finished. M. Tiercelin was confined in that fortress in 1776, when a great number of the prisoners formed the project of attempting their escape. They seized the moment when all were assisting together at Mass; at a preconcerted signal they rose simultaneously, collected in a body, dispersed their keepers, and seizing the chains and bars forced open the gates. They were nearly a hundred in number, their courage surmounted every obstacle, and they escaped. M. Tiercelin followed the rest. Compelled to fly from the search of his *all-powerful* daughter, he sought an asylum in a Convent of Benedictines at the Marais (in Paris), the Prior of which, named Hardi, was his intimate friend. They concerted together the most effectual means of concealing him; and the Prior dispatched him to the residence of one of his farmers, in a village, at the distance of five leagues from Paris, called Plaisirs les Gatteaux. He was soon discovered; his daughter obtained a second order for his imprisonment; and he was taken to St. Lazare, from whence, soon after, he was transferred to Vincennes.

The Jesuit, who thus controlled the actions of Mademoiselle Tiercelin, estimated his services at a high rate, and demanded

an extravagant recompense; the consequence was a quarrel between them. He had reason to fear, and he resolved to ruin, her. With this view, he forged a correspondence between her and the King of Prussia, containing matters prejudicial to the interests of France, and conveyed these documents into the hands of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who laid them before the King. Mademoiselle Tiercelin was conveyed to the Bastille; but the laws, inaccessible to others, interfered for her; she was confronted with her accuser, confounded him, and proved her innocence. The priest fled; sentence of banishment was pronounced against this monster, but the unhappy father remained at Vincennes, where *he was forgotten.*

M. de Malesherbes had lately been appointed to the Ministry. He dedicated his talents and virtues to the office, and France was proud of enrolling his name in the list of the few honest men whose characters reflected luster on their situations. His first duty was to inspect the state prisons, to hear the complaints, and console the sufferings, of the unhappy wretches who groaned there: his heart responded to the avocation, and he attended to it without delay. One day, the door of my chamber was opened, and the Lieutenant of the King, who preceded him, announced M. de Malesherbes. On hearing this respected name, my strength revived, and I felt as if animated by a new existence. He listened to the most minute details of my sufferings with profound attention, questioned me with a tone of kindness I had been long unaccustomed to, and appeared penetrated with compassion. How easily do the accents of innocence find a passage to a just and feeling heart! When I told him I had been imprisoned twenty-six years, his countenance, his gestures, expressed the deepest indignation; he struck the ground violently with his foot, and repeated several times, "twenty-six years!" When I had finished the recital of my misfortunes and my innocence, he inquired concerning my parents, my fortune, and my prospects; every word he spoke conveyed new life and consolation to my heart. I told him that up to the present moment I had been refused a hearing, and that I had solicited in vain the opportunity of justifying myself. He ordered M. de Rougemont, with a tone of displeasure, to supply me

with the means of writing whenever I required them; he bade me console myself and have patience, and left me with the assurance that in a little time I should be perfectly satisfied. I feared no treachery on the part of this virtuous Minister, but waited with tranquillity the effect of his promise.

A few days after, the turnkey opened the door of my prison, and told me to follow him. He conducted me to the Council-chamber, where I found the Lieutenant of the King, who offered me a seat. This unusual civility surprised me, and prepared me in some measure for what was to follow. He informed me that M. de Malesherbes, who was resolved to restore me to liberty, had instructed him to demand from me an account of my prospects and resources, and at the same time a list of the clothes I should require on leaving the prison. On the first point, I replied, that, after the many years of misery I had undergone, no privation could distress me, when I should be set at liberty, let my means of life be ever so contracted. I gave a list of the effects I stood in most urgent need of, taking special care not to make it too extensive, lest I should prolong even for a moment the term of my captivity.

At length, then, I flattered myself (and all who peruse these Memoirs will adopt the same opinion) that the period of my woes had arrived, and I was placed beyond the reach of further persecution. Protected by a just and powerful Minister, I could brave the impotent malice of my enemies. My readers will anticipate the immediate order for my liberation, but they will tremble when they discover their error. At this very moment, my implacable persecutors were weaving a plot against me, even more infernal than anything I have yet described. I vainly flattered myself I had tired them, but their malice was inexhaustible; they found new resources, when a crime was to be contrived that could still further glut their vengeance and their hatred.

Informed that I was on the point of escaping them, and unable to impose on M. de Malesherbes by the false statements which had hitherto supplied the pretext for my punishment, they forged documents, and accused me of crimes which had never before been imputed to me. They transmitted a memorial to the Minister, affirming it to be written and ad-

dressed to him by me, in which, among a thousand extravagances, evidently dictated by madness alone, was an assertion that Navarre ought to be separated from France.

I am aware that M. de Malesherbes has said, it was not the existence of this memoir alone which prevented him from restoring me to liberty; but that he had decided on sending me to Charenton, because he was unable to shake my determination of throwing myself at the King's feet, on the instant of my deliverance, and denouncing M. de Sartine as an abandoned monster. The Minister said this to one of my friends, in the month of December last. My answer is simple; M. de Malesherbes will pardon, and even respect me for it. The confidence of an unfortunate being, the frankness with which he expresses himself, is the purest homage he can offer to the rank and consequence of the man he is compelled to oppose. I must reproach M. de Malesherbes with a weakness which was rather a feature of the times he lived in, and the situation he filled, than belonging to his own character. It was one of the consequences of a despotic government, and inseparable from the polluted arena in which he ventured to endanger his own high and virtuous qualities.

Before I reason on the decision of this honest Minister, I protest that the fact on which it was based was entirely imaginary. That my enemies informed him such was my intention, and that I should only employ my liberty to study revenge; that, in support of this, they produced my former letter, written from the Bastille in the month of July, 1764; these are points to which I give ample credence. M. de Malesherbes neither saw nor suspected the evil passions that animated them; he formed but one opinion, and adopted it too hastily. In the multiplicity of his occupations, the subject became one of inferior interest; and afterwards, when it was again urged upon him, he recurred to his original impression. His heart is incapable of conceiving or uttering a falsehood. I repeat most solemnly, and he will not discredit me, *I never uttered a syllable to him, indicative of any project of vengeance against any of my enemies.* Such a feeling would have been just and natural, but it had ceased to become so necessary to me, that to indulge it I should sacrifice my liberty, my repose, and my life.

Nine days elapsed after I had been desired, by order of the Minister, to furnish the list of effects I required on issuing from my prison. During this time I ceased to feel the weight of my chains; the prospect of liberty was before me, I recovered the elasticity of my faculties, and I prepared myself for the happiness that awaited me. On the 29th of September, 1775, the jailer opened my door with unusual alacrity, and cried out, as if transported with emotion, "Sir, your woes are ended; the order for your liberation has arrived!" I followed him to the council-chamber; the Major handed me the necessary document to sign, and accompanied me to the court. There I found M. de Rougemont with two exempts. One of them, called Du Tronchet, said to me, "The Minister thinks it expedient to accustom you by degrees to breathe a purer air; you are therefore to remain for some months in a Convent of Monks, at a short distance from hence; I have orders to conduct you there."

These were the exact words the Exempt Rouillé had used on the 15th of August, 1764, when he came to the Bastille to transport me to Vincennes. I remembered them too well; they fell on my ears like a clap of thunder, and utterly paralyzed my faculties. Almost in a state of insensibility, I was conveyed into a hackney coach. I was scarcely seated in it, when another person followed me. He resembled a specter; his body was emaciated, his cheeks were hollow and livid. He had been eighteen years at Vincennes, and had no idea where he was going to. I collected my strength to explain to him what I knew of our situation. I observed that M. de Rougemont spoke with anger to the two exempts; I felt convinced that I was the subject of his discourse, and I was not mistaken. I listened, and heard him tell them plainly I was a dangerous and hardened criminal; he described to them my three escapes from the Bastille and Vincennes, recommended them to adopt the most secure precautions, and to tell my new keepers that they could not confine me too rigidly. Not satisfied with the tortures he had inflicted on me while I was subject to his brutal tyranny, he wished to prolong their effects, enraged no doubt at losing a number of prisoners, whom M. de Malesherbes, satisfied of their innocence, had removed from Vincennes, but whom his too con-

fiding credulity made him hesitate to liberate entirely. De Sartine and Le Noir, who dreaded the first ebullition of these prisoners on recovering their freedom, had persuaded the Minister that some of them were perverse spirits, whose natural dispositions led them to crime, and whom it would be desirable to save from the paroxysms of their own fury; and that others were convicted criminals, who, for the honor of the distinguished families to which they belonged, it would be advisable to shelter from the vengeance of the laws. M. de Malesherbes believed them, and, blindly yielding to their passions, became in some degree the accomplice of their crimes. I do not wish to excite his self-regret; but let him reflect that his example has furnished a powerful lesson; his virtues have failed to rescue him from the weaknesses of humanity, and there is not one among the most enthusiastic of his admirers, who, in reading the brilliant history of his life, is not compelled to lament that he cannot expunge an occasional page.

I soon experienced the effects of M. de Rougemont's instructions. The two exempts, when they entered the carriage, proceeded to bind me, and conducted us to Charenton. My companion in misfortune preserved more courage and composure than I did. He told me he was a Swiss, from the Canton of Fribourg, and that his name was Thorin. He inquired the news, and, in the course of their replies, our keepers informed us that *Louis the Fifteenth had died seventeen months before.*

CHAPTER III

When we arrived at Charenton, the two exempts consigned us over to some monks, *brethren of charity,* in whose hands the government of that hospital is placed; but, before they left us, they took care not to omit the particular recommendation of M. de Rougemont respecting me, and that the necessity of rigorous treatment might not be forgotten, on my entrance to this new Tartarus, I was again baptized by the name of *Danger,* an appellation well calculated to recall continually the calumnious assertions of my enemies, and to impress the idea of my formidable character. Up to this moment, I was ignorant of my ultimate destination, not knowing

the nature of the establishment at Charenton. I had been told I was to be transferred to a monastery; the principal inhabitants of this house wore the costume of monks, and I thought for once I had not been deceived, and that the monastic life would close my miserable career. I began to breathe more freely, and felt some relief from the terrible oppression which, for more than an hour, had almost deprived me of my faculties.

I followed my new hosts across a large court, in which I beheld about forty people, some of whom were dancing with the most extravagant gesticulations, while others, crowned with rags and remnants of paper, strutted up and down with an air of grotesque majesty. I inquired what these men were: the brother who conducted me answered that they were madmen. "Madmen!" exclaimed I, seized with sudden fury—"can this be a receptacle for lunatics?" "Exactly so," replied the monk. I heard no more—my senses failed, and I fell on the pavement. My guide called two keepers, who dragged me to a chamber where I was locked in. Some minutes after, the same monk entered the apartment, attended by the two keepers, and, presenting me a shirt and a night-cap, ordered me to undress and go to bed immediately. I observed that it was only two o'clock, and showed a disposition to resist; but, finding them prepared to use violence, I submitted to all they required. They then left me, locking the door carefully, and carrying away my clothes to search them.

I now ascertained too plainly that I had only changed my punishment and my executioners, and that I was still in a prison. But why was I confined with lunatics? Was this another species of torture, invented by my cruel enemies to insult my miseries by degrading me in my own estimation—to deprive me of the only advantage I retained, the title and attributes of a man, by assimilating me to these unhappy wretches, who had lost the precious faculties of feeling and thinking? Or, was I in reality reduced to the same miserable level? and was it possible that the despair which had so long consumed my body, had at last destroyed my mind? I rejected the latter idea at once; I felt myself in full possession of my senses; my organs were weakened, but they

were not exhausted, and my bosom burned with just indignation.

Two hours after, my door was opened; the noise roused me from these bitter reflections. The same monk reëntered, and, returning me my clothes, told me I might rise and dress myself. I followed his advice, and, going towards the window, saw that it was guarded by an enormous iron grating, with the bars so thickly crossed, that the light could scarcely penetrate. A dreadful noise assailed my ears; it resembled the groans and shrieks of at least fifty men undergoing the lash. I afterwards ascertained that immediately under my chamber was the vault in which they confined the most dangerous of the lunatics, who were always chained to the wall—a frightful neighborhood and a perpetual torment, the horror of which it would be difficult to exceed.

Towards the evening, my supper was handed to me through a small wicket which opened from my chamber on the corridor; it consisted of a small quantity of roast mutton and some white bread, with wine and water. I had no disposition to eat in my present situation: I drank a glass of water, and sent away the rest. Worn out by the painful weight of my reflections, I threw myself on the bed. About ten o'clock, I was strangely surprised to hear the sound of human voices; two persons ventured to break the profound silence of the night, which for so many years I had never known an instance of. One was the prisoner confined in the chamber adjoining mine; the other, in that immediately above. My mind was on the stretch for the slightest hint that could throw light on my fate and enable me to penetrate the future. I listened with intense attention, which redoubled when I found I was the subject of their conversation.

"Did you see," said the first, whose name was St. Luc—"did you see the prisoner they brought from Vincennes today, and who was placed in the adjoining room?"

"No," replied the other, named St. Magloire; "I was playing cards in the Viscount's chamber."

"Out of four," continued St. Luc, "who have been sent here from that Castle since yesterday, he is the only one they have confined; the other three are allowed the freedom of the corridors: doubtless he is a dangerous madman."

I had gone close to the window to hear them more plainly; at these words, I cried out that I was neither mad nor dangerous, but an unfortunate wretch who had undergone more than enough to make him both.

"You are welcome," replied one of them; "we thought you were asleep; you must have suffered much: have you been long a prisoner?"

"So long," replied I, "that, if I told you the time, you would conclude I must have committed the most dreadful crimes."

"The duration of your imprisonment," continued my new acquaintance, "could only convince us of your innocence: how long then have you been incarcerated?"

"Almost twenty-seven years."

"Twenty-seven years!" exclaimed both in the same moment: "such atrocities are unknown even in the prisons of Spain and Portugal; the Inquisition itself never inflicted a similar punishment." "You are doubtless," continued St. Luc, "acquainted with the three other prisoners who were brought here from Vincennes, yesterday and to-day. The least unfortunate of the number has been confined there seventeen years."

"One of them came in company with me," replied I; "I never saw him before, and I have never heard the others mentioned. At the Bastille, and at Vincennes, the prisoners are not permitted to have the slightest intercourse; each is strictly guarded in his chamber or his cell; they never see or speak to each other. I perceive with surprise that here you are not subjected to the same rules; in this prison, therefore, it is not considered a crime to converse."

"On the contrary," replied St. Luc, "day and night we can converse as we please, and meet occasionally: all who hear the story of your misfortunes will feel an interest in your fate, and we will do all in our power to console you."

"Ah!" replied I, "your generous offers already mitigate my sufferings; but pardon me—I have been informed that none but lunatics are confined here, and neither of you appear to come under that designation."

St. Magloire interrupted me, and said, "This is not exclusively a receptacle for absolute lunatics, but sometimes

they confine here those whom they please to call *bad heads,*—whom the heat of passion, or the impulse of the moment, may have hurried into errors which are punished as crimes: when imprisoned here, the progress of corruption is rapid; their passions are allowed to prevail, they become irritated by persecution, and generally leave the place confirmed in vice and wickedness. For myself, I am only seventeen years old; my counselors are my head and my despair, but my parents have thought proper to place me here, and I hope, one day or other, they may not have occasion to repent.''

It was late; we therefore terminated our conversation, and went to sleep. Very early in the morning these amiable young men awakened me, and proposed to renew our discourse. All that had happened in the world for six-and-twenty years had for me the charms of novelty, particularly the events of the last nine, which I had passed without interruption at Vincennes. They related to me every occurrence of interest, and collected a number of newspapers, which they sent to my apartment to amuse me.

St. Luc supplied me with these details, and also with every information that could assist me in regulating my proceedings; but, not satisfied with this, he determined to ascertain why, contrary to the general rules of the place, I was confined to my chamber; and, if he could not procure my liberty, to obtain at least permission to visit me, accompanied by some of his companions. He sought for Father Prudence, one of the superiors of the house, and demanded why I was denied the privilege of walking in the corridors, which had been granted to the three other prisoners who came from Vincennes at the same time. Father Prudence replied that he had received no precise orders to confine me; but that the Exempt who brought me to Charenton had told him I was a very devil, a dangerous character not fit to be trusted, and that I was gifted with the powers of magic, since, by means that appeared supernatural, I had escaped once from the Bastille, and twice from Vincennes; and that it was through these urgent representations I had been treated with the rigor he complained of. St. Luc, whom I had made acquainted with the history of my misfortunes and the implacable fury of my enemies, related some instances of both to the Father,

and assured him that he would be responsible for my docility.

Although he could not at once succeed in procuring my enlargement, he obtained for me the indulgence of receiving visits from as many of the prisoners as felt disposed to communicate with me, and hastened himself to bring me the grateful tidings. He then went among his comrades, relating my story to all whose acquaintance and conversation he thought would be agreeable to me. He soon returned with several of them, who in the most touching manner expressed the interest my unhappy situation had excited. Their consoling society relieved my mind from the gloomy reflections in which it had been for so many years absorbed. The interchange of reciprocal civilities appeared to me like a new existence. At the Bastille, and at Vincennes, everything was silent and melancholy as the grave: no prisoner ever beheld a smile on the inflexible countenance of his jailers, who glided in and out of his cell, like sulky and speechless automatons. Here I was permitted the society of my fellow-men; I could listen to the sound of human voices, and they spoke in the accents of kindness, to which my heart had long been a stranger.

This delightful intercourse had continued for three days: my captivity no longer appeared painful; and I began to think I could, in my present circumstances, endure it without regret, when the evil genius that continually haunted my steps burst in again, to plunge me back into the abyss of horrors from which I vainly hoped I had finally escaped. My daily concert was about to commence, when a prisoner, who knew M. de Rougemont, came running eagerly to tell me that he had just seen him arrive and enter the apartments of the Superior. I had related to all my associates the promises of M. de Malesherbes, and mentioned the list I had been ordered to furnish of whatever I should require on leaving prison, a few days before my being sent to Charenton. They all agreed that I could only have been sent there as an experiment, to accustom me to the full use of my faculties before I was enlarged; that it was impossible M. de Malesherbes could forfeit his word, and that beyond a doubt M. de Rougemont was the bearer of the happy order which would at last restore me to the world and to myself. This

report spread rapidly through the establishment; the prisoners ran from every side to congratulate me; it seemed like the signal for a general fête, and everybody participated in the joy. The musicians had already commenced their concert, when one of the monks, entering the apartment suddenly, drove them all out, dispersed my numerous society, and, closing the wicket, issued the most peremptory orders that none of the prisoners should approach my chamber. My readers must have remarked, in the course of these Memoirs, that, whenever some new and heavy misfortune was hanging over my head and preparing to burst on me, it was preceded by some moments of more than ordinary enjoyment to render the shock more terrible.

In spite of the prohibition which had been issued, St. Luc and my other neighbors continued to converse with me through the grated bars of the windows; they were even incautious in their expressions, and boldly arraigned the cruelty of my persecutors. St. Luc determined to go beyond this, and assailed the superiors with the most energetic remonstrances against the orders they had given. They replied that they were perfectly satisfied with my conduct, and that, if it rested with them, they would at once throw open the door of my chamber, and give me the full liberty of the establishment, but that they were compelled to obey the positive instructions they had received.

St. Luc persevered, but without effect, until a melancholy event assisted his views, and furnished him with the means of success. It was during the winter of 1776; the weather was unusually severe, and one of the pensioners, confined to his chamber (I believe he was a Benedictine), perished from the cold. St. Luc resumed his applications in my behalf; he implored the superiors to consider that one victim was enough to satisfy the barbarous policy of the Ministers: they were shaken by his energy, and consented that I should be allowed to take my meals in the apartment of one of my fellow-prisoners named St. Bernard, in which there was always a good fire and abundance of society. This St. Bernard carried on a kind of traffic; he was skillful in making little baskets of straw and osier; he tamed birds, purchased wine from some of the prisoners, and re-sold to others the

articles he had constructed; his apartment became a general rendezvous of all the pensioners in the establishment. The orders once issued, my dinner and supper were served daily in St. Bernard's room. He was allowed to come for me, and I, of course, prolonged my meals as much as I possibly could.

I was not indebted to the clemency of the Ministers for the privileges of warming myself and taking my meals in the apartment of St. Bernard; the monks of Charenton took this upon themselves, although they told me their compassion would certainly expose them to censure. But they did not stop there: Father Facio, Superior of the Hospital, indignant at privations which appeared unmerited on my part, and moved by the urgent instances of my companions, waited upon M. de Malesherbes himself, to intercede in my behalf. He assured him of my submission and docility, and requested at least that my treatment might be ameliorated. His astonishment was unbounded, when the Minister told him that he himself had been most shamefully deceived, and that he had been persuaded to believe I was a furious madman. He condescended, as the Father informed me, to inquire into many particulars concerning me, appeared to feel for my situation, promised to give his immediate attention to it, and issued orders that I should be allowed every liberty consistent with the regulations of the place. He even carried his goodness so far as to recommend me to the special protection of the Superior, and charged him to assure me that, in a little time, all my wishes should be accomplished. But, once more, these brilliant hopes vanished into delusion. M. de Malesherbes, unable to carry into effect his own good intentions, and indignant at being sometimes forced to become an accomplice in evil, resigned his office and retired from the ministry. The day of his retreat became one of general mourning through France, and once more riveted the chains from which I appeared to be on the point of escaping.

In the meantime, Father Facio hastened to obey the orders he had received, and the doors of my apartment were thrown open. I cannot undertake to describe the joy I felt, or the general delight expressed by my companions, when this happy event occurred. I ran about like a child. I embraced every one that came in my way, and they all crowded anxiously

round me. Some carried me to their chambers, to show me the view from the windows: I gazed with admiration on the trees, the gardens, the vineyards; everything appeared like enchantment. Others invited me to join in their pastimes, and play with them at their different games; but my mind was too much occupied at first, to attend to the gratification of the external senses. After twenty-seven years of captivity, of despair, and tears, I felt that I had survived my miseries; and, although not absolutely restored to freedom, the contrast of my past and present lot almost amounted to that happy consummation.

At this period, a terrible discovery dissipated my illusions, and recalled once more my tears and my despair. I have already stated that among the lunatics at Charenton were some whose disorder was periodical; when these attacks came on, they were removed to subterranean dens or catacombs, where they were chained, and were sometimes confined in iron cages. When they recovered they were taken back to the quarter occupied by the other prisoners. One of these unfortunate beings, with whom I was one day conversing, and who had only returned among us a short time before, told me that d'Aligre, my old companion, with whom I had escaped from the Bastille, was in one of these cages. My readers will recollect that he was re-taken at Brussels, from thence conducted back to the Bastille, where, like me, he had been put in irons, and thrown into a dungeon on a straw pallet without covering. His reason gave way under his misfortunes, which ended in raving madness, without any interval of sanity. He was sent to Charenton, where, for more than ten years, he had been chained in a cage. I was struck with horror on hearing this account, and felt a strong anxiety to see him immediately.

I hastened to the brother who had charge of the cells, and implored his permission to visit my unfortunate friend. I felt convinced that he would recognize me, and I hoped to restore him. I was pale and breathless with grief and impatience; the monk, seeing the state I was in, requested me to wait some days: "No," replied I, "I will never quit you till you have taken me to him. I wish to see, to weep with him, to moisten his chains with my tears." Notwithstanding

my pressing importunity, I was obliged to wait several hours, the monk, under various pretexts, refusing to accompany me till the evening: I am convinced he employed the interval in clothing my unhappy friend. Madmen, in the condition to which he was reduced, tear and devour their garments; they are often left in a state of complete nudity, and he was unwilling to exhibit d'Aligre in that melancholy situation.

At last, I was allowed to see him. I trembled as I passed into his miserable den. I expected to find my former friend, I saw only a squalid specter; his hair matted and in disorder, his eyes sunken and haggard, his whole figure so worn and attenuated, that it was scarcely possible to recognize him. The appalling spectacle pursues me still, and is ever present to my imagination. I threw myself on his neck to embrace him; he repulsed me with aversion. I endeavored to recall him to himself: "Do you not remember your old friend?" said I. "I am Latude, who assisted you to escape from the Bastille; have you no recollection of me?" He turned on me a petrifying look, and in a stifled tone exclaimed, *"I know you not—begone—I am God!"* I could extract nothing further from him. I groaned in utter agony at my disappointment: some of the pensioners who had accompanied me, in their anxiety to terminate this painful interview, dragged me away, and forced me back to my chamber.

My readers will be affected by this incident; they will be more shocked when I tell them this unfortunate being is still in existence. At the time I speak of, he had been ten years in that dreadful situation; at present, he has endured it for double that period. Death has refused to terminate his punishment, and no one has been found sufficiently humane to anticipate the final blow and relieve the wretched victim from his misery. I forget my own misfortunes when my mind reverts to those of d'Aligre; I become inflamed with a holy indignation, which drives me beyond the bounds of endurance. This amiable young man possessed both virtue and talents; he might have become a valuable citizen, an estimable member of society; and behold the state to which he was reduced by the pride of a courtezan and the infamous complaisance of a Minister! If they had committed but this single crime, if they had immolated but this one victim, what

atonement have they offered to the laws they outraged and the country they disgraced? What sacrifice have they made to humanity, to absolve them from this iniquity? What claims, what services can they plead, in mitigation of their guilt? Are they to be found in the exactions, the prodigality, the scandalous and overbearing luxury of the former; or in the despotism, the incapacity, and ignorance of the latter?[1]

And yet such were the tyrants to whose yoke we so long and patiently submitted. Such were our sovereigns, our *gods!* And there are still men in existence base enough to regret the laws, or rather the frightful abuse of all laws, which degraded us to the condition of slaves to these and many similar monsters!

The establishment of Charenton, useful and necessary in some respects, was also, as my case will prove, one of the secret asylums where arbitrary power consigned its victims and consummated its detestable mysteries. Despotism was less cruel there than in the other states prisons, but its practice was more criminal. Elsewhere, the laws were disavowed, and never alluded to. The Ministers were known to be absolute, and hypocrisy was unnecessary. At Charenton it was different; every year, the forms at least of justice were carefully attended to. In the month of September, a committee from the Parliament of Paris visited the establishment, to hear the complaints of the prisoners. They listened to their remonstrances, dried their tears, and revived their hopes. But this imposing practice afforded little consolation to the innocent. I have been assured, on good authority, that this visit was a mere outward form, to sanction, in the eyes of the monarch and the people, the iniquities of the Ministers, and that it seldom produced any beneficial results. There was no instance of a person, confined on a *lettre de cachet,* obtaining redress from the laws through the medium of this mock tribunal. I was unwilling to think so, yet I saw many of my companions, as guiltless as I was, appeal to it in vain; and I myself have twice appeared before these magistrates: each time I have implored their justice, and proved to them my innocence, and *still I remained a prisoner.*

[1] M. de Sartine, when created Minister of Marine, did not even know the meaning of a *Fire-ship.*

All the principals of the establishment loudly expressed their indignation, and promised to continue their efforts to obtain my liberty. The Lieutenant of Police came shortly after to make his stated inspection of the prisons; they brought me into his presence; it was then in the month of October, 1776: all united in praising my good conduct and uniform docility, since I had been committed to their charge. M. Le Noir, forced to reply to their urgent solicitations, promised to grant their request without delay. I waited patiently for three months; I then wrote to him, reminding him of his promises, but all in vain. *I still remained a prisoner!*

. I then thought of trying other means. One of the pensioners with whom I was on most intimate terms was the young Chevalier de Moyria; he was a native of Languedoc as well as myself, born at Béziers, and of a very old family. He was confined at Charenton for drawing his sword on his brother. I had acted as his Mentor while he was detained there; he obtained his liberty, and took charge of some letters I gave him for my own family as well as his. His mother did me the honor to send me an answer, offering me her services, and informing me that she had already written in my favor to M. de St. Vigor, Comptroller-General of the Queen's Household; she proposed to write to several other friends, and sent me also the copy of a power of attorney, by which she consented to be recognized as my mother and protectress. I hastened to express to her my warm and lasting gratitude. M. de St. Vigor was a just and sensible man. He possessed the credit which virtue will sometimes obtain, even in a corrupted court. As soon as he received the letter from the Countess de Moyria, he wrote to me to request instructions as to the course he should adopt. I forwarded to him whatever documents I considered necessary, and implored him not to apply to M. Le Noir, as I well knew in that quarter intercession was hopeless. He addressed himself to M. Amelot, and obtained the order for my liberation, which was brought to me, at last, on the 7th of June, 1777, by M. de la Croix, Inspector of Police.

CHAPTER IV

At length, then, I was free! I left Charenton the instant that the order arrived. I was without hat or coat; my wardrobe consisted of a single pair of stockings and breeches, torn and full of holes; instead of shoes, I had an old pair of slippers, which the brethren of charity had given me; a great coat I had bought at Brussels in 1747, reduced to rottenness in the dungeons I had so long inhabited, and devoured by insects; this completed my equipment: I was without a penny in my pocket, without resources, acquaintances, or friends. But I was regardless of all these circumstances: it was enough, *I was free!*

Alas! this happy sentiment was destined soon to give place to others, if possible more appalling than any I had yet experienced. Let me suspend my recital for a moment, and gather strength for the details of misery I have still to lay before my readers. Up to this moment, they have doubtless pitied me, and considered me unfortunate; what name can they apply to the additional torments I have still to describe; and how can I hope to keep alive their sympathy, already exhausted by the scenes through which they have accompanied me? I might almost say it was only from this hour I became truly unfortunate; all that I had hitherto suffered, all I had gone through, was light in comparison to the awful future that awaited me: fate appeared to have exhausted its malice, but it was only to prepare me for what I was yet doomed to endure.

The inspector of police, who brought the *lettre de cachet* which restored me to liberty, had expressly desired me to call on M. Le Noir. How could I present myself before him in the rags that at present covered me? His valet would have repulsed me with horror. I remembered, fortunately, having heard the young Chevalier de Moyria, while at Charenton, speak of an individual, a native of Montagnac, who resided at Gros-Caillou; I determined to seek him out; he knew nothing of me, but he might have heard me mentioned, and he could not fail to have been acquainted with my family in our native town. I was not deceived in my calculations, but it took me some time and trouble to convince him of my identity. He

told me that, while he resided at Montagnac, the whole town was persuaded that, after my flight to Holland, I had embarked for the West Indies; that the vessel was shipwrecked on the passage, and that I was drowned. My enemies had propagated this report to put a stop to all complaints and inquiries, and to enjoy in tranquillity the pleasure of torturing me. I gave this man convincing proofs of who I was, and succeeded in removing all his doubts. He then received me with kindness, and lent me twenty-five louis, with which I immediately supplied myself with clothes; on the following day I was in a fit condition to present myself before the Lieutenant of Police.

I presented myself before M. Le Noir; he spoke to me with apparent kindness, and told me that his secretary, M. Boucher, would furnish me with the address of a person who had received instructions from my family to supply me with money to purchase necessaries and equip me for my journey to my native province: he advised me to obey the order I had received, and depart at once for Montagnac. I requested his permission to go first to Versailles, to thank the Minister who had restored me to liberty, and the kind protector who had solicited it: this he willingly accorded.

I returned to Paris agitated by fear, and full of fatal presentiments. My landlord handed me a letter, countersigned *Le Noir.* The name made me tremble: I opened the packet, and found it contained an order to repair immediately to his presence; I obeyed on the instant. He received me with fury depicted on his countenance, and told me in a tone of thunder, that if I did not immediately set out on my journey, he would cause me to be arrested; he then turned his back and left me.

I hesitated not a moment, but renouncing the permission of the Minister, I prepared to fly forever from a place where an abyss was continually yawning under my feet. I went to take leave of my countryman at Gros-Caillou, who had already supplied my pressing necessities. His name was Grolier, a surgeon in the hospital of the French Guards at that place. My dejection terrified him; he approved of my resolution of instant flight, and assured me I had not a moment to lose. A clerk of the police had given me the address

of the person who was directed by some of my relations to supply me with the funds I should require for my journey; Grolier said it was useless to waste time in looking for him, and that he himself would furnish me with whatever sum I required. He had already advanced me twenty-five louis, seven of which I had still remaining; he gave me twelve and a half more, and I took leave of him, being his debtor in the amount of 900 francs.

On the 10th of July, I had seen M. Amelot at Versailles; on the 11th, I received the orders of M. Le Noir to set out immediately from Paris; and on the 12th, I embarked in the passage-boat for Auxerre. Thus, with a heavy heart, I began to retrace my steps towards my native province, where nothing awaited me but misery and despair. I could not enjoy the happiness of flying from my persecutors and escaping forever from the scenes of my misfortunes; my soul was too deeply burdened to admit a single sensation of pleasure. On the 15th, I was at St. Brecy, forty-three leagues from Paris, on the road to Montagnac. I saw a man arrive, who accosted me immediately, and announcing himself as Desmarets an Exempt of Police from Paris, then *arrested me in the King's name!*

A thunderbolt would have overpowered me less. I thought I was in a dream, and my senses wandered in a kind of delirium. I recovered myself, however, and informed this man that he must have deceived himself; at the same time I showed him the order for my enlargement from Charenton, which also indicated the place of exile to which I was traveling. I desired to know of what crime I was accused; since I had received that order I had done nothing, I had neither written nor spoken a single word which could offend any one. He replied that most certainly he was not mistaken; his orders were to follow me with all speed to Montagnac, in case he should not be able to overtake me on the road, and to bring me back to the Châtelet at Paris. Beyond this he had no instructions. I had in my possession seventeen louis d'or in gold, and several crowns in silver; he demanded the whole of this, on pretense of keeping it for me, searched me to discover if I was provided with arms, and affixed a seal to a packet of papers he found in my traveling bag, and in which

it would have been very difficult to discover anything that could bear testimony against me. He informed me that his instructions were to place me in irons, but that he would be quite satisfied if I would pledge my word not to attempt escape. I had scarcely strength to give the pledge he required. He placed me in a post-chaise, and we resumed the road to Paris, where we arrived on the following day, the 16th of July, 1777. He conducted me to the little Châtelet, where I was received in secret. Three days after, Commissary Chenon the elder came to take charge of the packet containing my papers, which Desmarets had committed to the jailer on my entering the prison.

It will scarcely be believed that all I have hitherto described was nothing in comparison to what was now preparing for me. I thought I had suffered every imaginable evil, but there was one to which I was yet a stranger. It still remained for my enemies to overwhelm me with it, and to add this outrage to all they had previously inflicted on me—to confound me with the vilest criminals, and to force me into conjunction with them in their loathsome dens. I shudder still, when I pronounce the name of *Bicêtre:* it was there that I was conducted. On the 10th of August, I was removed from the little Châtelet; and after having paid for my subsistence, my lodging, and a number of fees incidental to the place, with my own money, they returned to me nine louis, out of the seventeen which the Exempt Desmarets had found on my person. I was forced to get into a hackney coach, and conveyed to that sink of infamy, which I blush even to name. I had almost lost my senses and was unable to move: my clothes were torn from my back, and I was stripped entirely naked; I was then re-clad in a shirt made of coarse packthread, an under-waistcoat without sleeves, a coat and a pair of breeches of the coarsest woolen stuff, a pair of *sabots*,[1] and a cap quite in keeping with these miserable equipments. I was then conducted by two soldiers, armed with bludgeons, to a dungeon, where I was supplied with a scanty portion of bread and water.

During my former captivity, whenever I was enabled to

[1] Wooden shoes, commonly worn by all the peasantry throughout France.

hold intercourse with the other prisoners, I generally found them honorable men, whose manners and education rendered their society agreeable; but here, I was entirely surrounded by common ruffians; I was condemned to endure their gross and disgusting language, to listen to their unprincipled projects, in short, to inhale the very atmosphere of vice. The localities of Bicêtre are such that the prisoners, although not in sight, can hear and converse with each other. A number of little stalls, called *cabanons*, are constructed in several long galleries; in each of these a prisoner is confined; he has no table or chair, his furniture consists of a wretched truckle bed, and a wooden porringer which serves to hold his soup, and is often used on many other occasions. These galleries are about six feet in breadth; the doors of the stalls are exactly opposite to one another; in each there is a small wicket, through which the prisoners are supplied with their daily allowance of bread and water. These wickets are all opened at the same hour; the prisoners thrust out their heads; they see each other, converse, dispute, quarrel, abuse, and swear reciprocally; sometimes they even throw bottles or *sabots*, and the tumult augments, until the sergeant of the guard, assisted by his vigorous satellites, drives them into their respective dens with lusty blows.

My dungeon was a cell of eight feet square, which all the rats in the neighborhood appeared, by common consent, to make their place of nightly rendezvous. I have had fifty at a time under my coverlet; to sleep was impossible, and they entirely destroyed my repose.

One day I was fortunate enough to satisfy my hunger, and even retained a small piece of bread, which I destined for the next day's meal. I had tied it up in my handkerchief, and concealed it in my pocket. The accursed rats devoured both handkerchief and pocket, to rob me of my precious provision. One of the greatest privations I suffered was the absence of snuff. Those who are in the habit of taking it will easily comprehend how distressing it is to be without this consolation. I had no resource but sometimes to accept a pinch from the filthy keepers, but I was obliged to indulge myself very sparingly, or my stock would soon have been exhausted; I therefore retained it in my box, and contented

myself with the odor; I had only the means of gratifying a single sense, and even that one I was compelled to deceive.

Setting aside the fleas, the rats, M. de Sartine, and M. Le Noir, I had still other enemies to struggle with, of which the cold and damp were the most formidable. In rainy weather, and in winter during the thaws, the water streamed down the sides of my dungeon, and I became a martyr to rheumatism. The pain I suffered completely deprived me of the use of my limbs, and I remained for whole weeks without moving from my pallet; the keeper, during this time, gave me no soup, for I was unable to approach the wicket; he flung my allowance of bread to me, and I was left alone, a prey to my bodily and mental agonies.

My sufferings increased as the cold weather set in. The window of my cell, defended by a strong iron grating, looked out on the corridor, in the wall of which was an aperture about ten feet high, exactly opposite. This opening was also protected by iron bars, and through it I received the scanty portion of air and light I was allowed to enjoy; but the wind, the rain, and the snow, penetrated in the same manner, and I had nothing to protect me from their effects. I was without fire or candle-light; my clothes consisted of an old cap, and under-waistcoat without sleeves, and a coat, all of coarse woolen cloth; a pair of *sabots,* and stockings full of holes, which scarcely reached to the calf of my leg. The frost was as severe within my cell as in the open air, and, throughout the winter, I was compelled to break the ice in my water bucket with my *sabot,* and dissolve it in my mouth to slake my thirst. To diminish the excessive cold, which during one of the winters was intense beyond precedent, I had no resource but to close up my window, which proved the worst alternative of the two. The mephitic odors which exhaled from the gutters and sewers that completely enveloped my dungeon, almost suffocated me; this infected air, having no escape, condensed, and violently affected my eyes, my mouth, and my lungs. During thirty-eight months I remained in this deplorable situation, a prey to hunger, cold, damp and rheumatism, and given up to the most cruel despair, unenlivened by a ray of hope. Hitherto I had borne all this with a constancy almost superhuman, but I succumbed at last. I was now

attacked by scurvy; the symptoms displayed themselves in a general lassitude, and unintermitting pain in all my limbs, which rendered it equally intolerable to sit up or lie down. In less than ten days, my legs and thighs swelled to a frightful extent; the lower part of my body became black, my gums inflamed, my teeth loosened, and I was no longer capable of chewing my bread. For some time I had been unable to drag myself to my wicket, to receive my portion of soup; for three entire days I had taken no sustenance whatever; I was stretched on my pallet of straw, without strength, incapable of motion, and almost senseless: I was abandoned in this fearful extremity, and none of the keepers inquired whether I was alive or dead. Some of my neighbors spoke to me, but I was unable to answer them; they concluded I was dead, and called out for assistance; the keepers hurried to the spot, and found me expiring. The surgeon ordered me to be placed on a litter, and carried to the infirmary of St. Roch. It is impossible to describe the dirt and filth of this establishment, and the cruel treatment of the unfortunate inmates. It is not to cure them, but to abridge their sufferings, they are sent there. In this infernal lazar-house, the sick are huddled in a crowd, without regard to the infectious nature of their complaints; the mattresses are laid one across the other, and the patients are thrown on them indiscriminately,—one on the right expiring,—on the left, another is already dead; whilst the eyes of the survivor wander over the charnel-house that surrounds him.[2]

It is scarcely credible that I could survive, and the surgeon himself expressed his wonder, when on each successive day I still exhibited signs of existence. At the end of five months, for the first time they attempted to raise me from my bed, and the plasters and dressings were removed. I thought I was completely crippled. The severity of the scorbutic humors had so violently affected my nerves, that the tendons of my legs were contracted; I tried to stand upright, but found it impossible: by the aid of crutches, I was able in some degree to support myself. When I wished to put on my clothes, I

[2] Latude's account of this hospital is more circumstantial in its details, but we have condensed them, to avoid offending too much the delicacy of modern readers.

found my breeches were missing; the keepers, doubtless, had made away with them. They stripped off a pair of drawers from the body of a patient who had just expired, and forced me to put them on. For several weeks I hobbled round my bed on my crutches; this exercise dissipated the acrid humors in my legs, and by degrees I became able to walk, and hold myself upright. I then implored vehemently to be removed from the infirmary. I expected to be taken back to my cell; but my astonishment was great, when I found myself placed in a tolerable apartment, clean and well aired, from which I had a view of the country and the principal court. Was it the contempt or compassion of my keepers that obtained for me this unexpected change?

But the most valuable advantage of my transfer was that I escaped from the loathsome society to which I had been so long condemned, and could again see and converse with the respectable portion of the prisoners. We soon became intimate, and interchanged mutual services. I wrote letters for some, and composed petitions for others; and in return, when they received supplies from their friends, they divided them with me. Sometimes they gave me snuff, and occasionally meat and bread of a better quality than our ordinary allowance. The contrast of these indulgences was too great to be lasting, and I had not yet completely drained the bitter cup of my misfortunes.

Every day, Bicêtre is visited by many people who come to see the establishment; the greater number are led there by curiosity, but some few are influenced by charity and compassion. They speak to the prisoners with kindness, and relieve their wants; when any among them happen to be of rank, or to possess interest, they receive memorials, and in more than one instance have obtained the liberation of the petitioner. I determined to try this experiment, and, keeping my petition in readiness, watched for a visitor whose appearance might indicate the will and the power to serve me. I thought I had fully succeeded, when I selected a young lady, who was announced as a princess of the House of Bouillon, and who was attended by the officers of the establishment with every mark of profound respect. I observed many of the prisoners throw their petitions towards her, as she passed their

windows. I followed their example, and mine fell close to her feet. Unfortunately, M. Leleu, comptroller of the prison, saw it, picked it up, and put it in his pocket. It was a crime in me to utter a complaint: my memorial contained nothing but a detail of my miserable situation. I accused, I named no one, but it was enough to petition, and I was treated as a mutineer. Two days afterwards, a sergeant and four soldiers conducted me to a dungeon, even more desolate than any I had hitherto inhabited. I now became once more a prey to all the horrors from which, for several weeks, I had in some measure escaped. I was again surrounded by miscreants, and doomed to listen to their blasphemous and disgusting ejaculations. I would fain have endeavored to divert my mind by writing, but I was without a farthing to purchase a sheet of paper, to procure which, with a pen and ink, I sold my black bread, and was again reduced to dispute with the pigs of La Voiron, the crusts which were swept up from the galleries.

A short time after this, a fortunate event produced a slight amelioration in the lot of the prisoners, and afforded me a presage of future happiness. Madame Necker came to Bicêtre. This distinguished lady is not indebted either to her rank or her name for the universal homage rendered freely to her virtues alone; the blessings of the wretched accompany her steps, and may well console her for the vain attacks of envy and malice. It was not curiosity, but compassion, that induced her to visit us: she was unable to relieve all our necessities, but she endeavored to remove the most intolerable. Being informed by the prisoners that the small quantity of bread allowed them was inadequate to their support, she immediately bestowed a donation sufficient to add one quarter to the daily proportion of each. It was through her generous sensibility, that the cries of famine ceased to be heard within the walls of Bicêtre. To this venerable protectress I owe my liberty and my life; I shall relate in due course her inestimable services, and the respectful gratitude with which they have inspired me: I may justly feel proud of having been distinguished by her kindness. From the moment of her visit, my heart began once more to throb with hope; at last, my evil destiny appeared to relax its persecutions, but a few parting blows reminded me that my present misery was more

acute than my anticipations of future peace. I was still enduring a physical torture which I had experienced before, although never to so cruel and dangerous an extent. After having triumphed over so many disasters, and vanquished so many enemies by my unshaken constancy, I was on the point of yielding to the intolerable pain occasioned by the vermin which infested my person. My dungeon was totally dark, my eyesight was nearly extinguished, and I tried in vain to deliver myself from the myriads of these noxious animals that assailed me at once; the dreadful irritation made me tear my flesh with my teeth and nails, until my whole body became covered with ulcers; insects generated in the wounds, and literally devoured me alive. It was impossible to sleep, I was driven mad with agony, my sufferings were drawing to a close, and death in its most horrid shape awaited me.

Whilst I lay in this deplorable condition, praying for the moment of my dissolution, about six o'clock in the evening of the 15th of September, 1784, I heard myself loudly called by all my neighboring comrades. "Father Jedor!" they cried out, using the affectionate title they had given me, "here is President de Gourgue in the royal court—excellent, glorious news!" I feebly asked them to explain, on which they informed me that this humane and just magistrate sometimes came to visit the prisons, on which occasions he always liberated some of the prisoners. They offered to bring him to my cell; he heard them, and, yielding to their solicitations, came to the wicket, through which a few rays of light were able to penetrate. He spoke to me with kindness, and encouraged me by many questions to relate my misfortunes: I answered with the confidence of innocence, but I saw that his suspicions were not easily removed. The extremity of the punishment I had undergone, and the audacity of my enemies, had always been their ground of defense. It was difficult to believe that men could be found, capable of such persevering, such gratuitous barbarity—an excusable, but a fatal mode of reasoning, which, while it martyred the innocent, secured the impunity of their guilty persecutors.

The President de Gourgue listened to me with attention and interest, and, when I had finished my melancholy recital, said, "No one, but a being totally without a heart, could see

you in this horrible place without feeling pity. Thirty-two years! It is indeed an awful period of captivity, but, if the tribunals have the power of doing justice, you shall not languish much longer in a dungeon: the worst part of the business is that you are confined under a *lettre de cachet.* Yet I do not despair of serving you effectually. Forward a memorial to me, containing an exact detail of all you have undergone: be careful not to exceed the truth, for your cause is lost if you deceive me. Rely on my zealous exertions; your misfortunes are too heavy for them to escape my memory: farewell." He then turned to an official clerk who accompanied him, and said to him, "When this prisoner has prepared his memorial, let it be transmitted to me immediately."

The weakness of my sight and the obscurity of my cell, prevented me from distinguishing the features of M. de Gourgue, and from observing the expression of his countenance; but, as soon as he was gone, one of the guards in attendance, who felt some compassion for me, ran back to communicate to me his own remarks. "Sir," said he, "I saw M. de Gourgue shed tears while you were narrating your sufferings; you may rest assured he will not abandon you!" I had then received the most touching tribute of compassion from this virtuous magistrate. The reflection passed like balm into my lacerated heart, my own tears fell in torrents, and, for the first time during many years, I passed a tranquil night.

I lost not a moment in preparing my memorial. For nine successive days I sold my bread, to procure the writing paper: notwithstanding the positive orders given by M. de Gourgue that I should be supplied with all the requisite materials, everything I asked for was subbornly refused. I applied my utmost faculties to the completion of my work, and poured out my soul with confidence into the bosom of this good and powerful protector; I omitted nothing, however trifling, but I related all without bitterness, and at the same time without reserve. I was very careful not to let the memorial be seen by any of the officers of Bicêtre: they would have read it, and I already knew, by fatal experience, in what light the complaints of a prisoner were regarded. To escape this additional misfortune, I sold a shirt and a pair of silk stockings, which I had carefully preserved for the long-looked-for day

of my deliverance: with the money, I engaged the services of the same messenger who had formerly delivered some letters for me. I know not whether this man was drunk, or if my good genius directed the accident, but he dropped the packet and lost it in the streets of Paris. I have longed ardently to arrive at this epoch of my history. Every time I recur to it, my woes disappear, my griefs diminish, and I look back almost with complacency on my preceding miseries, which led to such a termination. Hitherto, I have excited only the horror and compassion of my readers, but the succeeding events of my life will draw largely on their admiration.

A young female found the packet; the envelope had been torn by the wet, and the seal had given way. She looked for the signature, and read as follows: "MASERS DE LATUDE, *a prisoner during thirty-two years at the Bastille, at Vincennes, and at Bicêtre, where he is confined, on bread and water, in a dungeon ten feet under ground.*" She immediately repaired home, and read through with intense anxiety the circumstantial detail of my misfortunes; she then took a copy of the memorial, and forwarded the original to its address. Her gentle nature was equally impressed with pity and indignation, but she had a clear and powerful intellect, and subdued the first impulses of feeling: in the course of six months, she formed her plan, possessed herself of all the necessary information, met and overcame a thousand obstacles, and prepared everything for the final accomplishment of her object.

Being thoroughly convinced of my innocence, she resolved to attempt my liberation: she succeeded, after occupying three years in unparalleled efforts and unwearied perseverance. Every feeling heart will be deeply moved at the recital of the means she employed and the difficulties she surmounted. Without relations, friends, fortune, or assistance, she undertook everything, and shrank from no danger and no fatigue. She penetrated to the levees of the Ministers, and forced her way to the presence of the great; she spoke with the natural eloquence of truth, and falsehood fled before her words. They excited her hopes and extinguished them, received her with kindness and repulsed her rudely: she reiterated her petitions, and returned a hundred times to the attack, emboldened by defeat itself. The friends her virtues had created trembled

for her liberty, even for her life. She resisted all their entreaties, disregarded their remonstrances, and continued to plead the cause of humanity. When seven months pregnant, she went on foot to Versailles, in the midst of winter; she returned home, exhausted with fatigue and worn out by disappointment; she worked more than half the night to obtain subsistence for the following day, and then repaired again to Versailles. At the expiration of eighteen months, she visited me in my dungeon, and communicated her efforts and her hopes. For the first time I saw my generous protectress; I became acquainted with her exertions, and I poured forth my gratitude in her presence. She redoubled her anxiety, and resolved to brave everything. Often, on the same day, she has gone to Montmartre to visit her infant, which was placed there at nurse, and then came to Bicêtre to console me and inform me of her progress. At last, after three years, she triumphed, and procured my liberty! But such a hasty summary of actions like these is equally unjust and ungrateful. My readers will readily pardon me for entering into more minute details, and every honest heart will respond with sympathy and admiration.

Madame Legros—(whose name, for the honor of humanity, I ought to repeat at least as often as those of M. de Sartine and M. Le Noir)—Madame Legros carried on business as a mercer, and, as I have stated, picked up accidentally and read the memorial I had addressed to the President de Gourgue. Until that moment, she was ignorant of my existence. Her husband participated in her feelings, and both resolved to use their utmost endeavors to procure my liberty. Their course appeared sufficiently plain: they took a copy of the memorial, and, on the following day, M. Legros carried the original to the residence of the President; he insisted on delivering it into his own hands; he was admitted, and handed it to M. de Gourgue, who told him that he had seen the unfortunate being who demanded justice at his hands, and had been strongly affected by his story; that, without waiting for the memorial, he had already taken steps in his favor, but had learned, with surprise and disappointment, that he was a confirmed lunatic, subject to periodical fits of madness, which thirty-two years of confinement had been unable to cure, and

which rendered him extremely dangerous: that, in fact, he could do no more than pity him and lament his fate.

Legros returned home, and told his wife that the President advised them to give up the vain attempt of undertaking a hopeless case. She was shaken, and hesitated, but, on reflection, became convinced that I was not a lunatic, and that the charge was an invention of my persecutors. She read my memorial over again. It was temperate, and carried on in a regular sequence. I spoke of my enemies with the boldness of conscious innocence unjustly oppressed, but she could discover no traces of disordered reason or incoherent madness. All was consistent and suitable to my situation. Her clear, decisive intellect enabled her to see the truth at once, and to escape the error into which the President de Gourgue and other equally just and benevolent magistrates had suffered themselves to be betrayed. These men would have regarded my deliverance as among the brightest actions of their lives; and yet, with ample knowledge of mankind, and full experience of their crimes, they suffered their easy disposition to be imposed on by audacity and imposture. Madame Legros was forcibly impressed by the simple and obvious fact that my enemies accused me of no crime. They said I was a dangerous madman—if so, I must have become one in prison. Why had I been confined; and why imprisoned so long? I, in my turn, accused my persecutors of unfounded tyranny. They could produce against me neither charge, evidence, nor sentence; but I could oppose to them their conduct and their unremitting cruelty, which alone was sufficient to convict them.

These reflections led her to the fact. It was clear that my enemies had punished me unjustly, and that they were resolved to stifle my complaints, lest by a word I should in my turn destroy them. If they accused me of specific crimes, they would be obliged to produce some proof; but, by designating me as a madman, they disarmed the remonstrances of my friends, and paralyzed their efforts. I was a burden on the face of nature, and it was absolutely necessary I should remain in bondage. But, if my loss of reason was my only offense, why was I not suffered to remain at Charenton, which establishment is exclusively devoted to the reception of luna-

tics? Why removed to Bicêtre, where I underwent the punishment and the privations of a criminal? The inconsistency of my persecutors destroyed their own assertions. My courageous advocate easily inspired her husband with her own conviction: she resolved to persevere, and made a solemn vow to save me, or perish in the attempt. A friend of her husband offered to participate in the danger of the enterprise; and her husband himself not only suffered her to devote her time and sacrifice her interest, during three years, to the cause of an unknown stranger, but seconded her efforts with equal zeal and perseverance.

My zealous protectress had continued with unremitting perseverance her efforts in my favor, for the space of eighteen months, during which time she had never seen the unhappy object of her solicitude. She was most anxious to behold me, and at last discovered a method of surmounting the difficulties which opposed her wish. She ascertained that the good Abbé Legal, my former friend, could easily obtain permission to visit the prisoners at Bicêtre. She immediately called upon him, and communicated her object. He was equally solicitous, and they arranged a day, on which he requested an order to be admitted to speak with me. The order was granted, but for himself alone, and my attached protectress could only gratify herself by seeing me cross the court, as they conducted me to the Abbé, who was ushered into the Hall by himself. She acquainted me by letter with these particulars, and informed me that I should know her, as I passed, by a branch of box which she should carry in her hand. She cautioned me at the same time to suppress all emotion, and not to betray to the observers the mutual intelligence of our souls.

The anticipated hour arrived; two keepers, armed with huge clubs, opened the wicket of my cell, and ordered me to follow them. My feelings overpowered the feeble remains of my strength, my knees trembled, and I could scarcely drag myself along, supported by my attendant guards. And what was the situation of my friend, my more than mother? Pale and breathless with anxiety, she awaited my approach; she saw me, and averted her eyes with involuntary horror. She beheld a loathsome specter, with haggard eyes, wrinkled fea-

tures, livid lips, and a long-neglected beard, which nearly concealed his face and descended to his waist; she saw me tottering with palsied steps, and scantily covered with foul and wretched tatters. I arrived near the spot where she was standing; at first my feeble sight, dazzled by the unwonted brilliancy of daylight, refused to aid my wishes, and I was unable to distinguish her, but my heart soon guided my imperfect organs; I saw, I flew towards her, I found myself pressed in her arms, and our tears mingled copiously together. It is vain to attempt a description of this ecstatic moment, which almost balanced the amount of my sufferings during thirty-four years of despair and persecution.

I was compelled to tear myself from my generous friend, to enter the hall where the Abbé Legal expected me: she waited the moment of my return; again I found myself in her arms, we wept in concert, and the humanity of my guards even allowed me the opportunity of a few minutes' conversation.

Such strong and repeated intercessions began at last to produce the effect which my numerous partizans had so long expected, but my evil destiny was not yet entirely accomplished. Madame Legros, following the advice of the Cardinal, had at length been enabled to present a memorial to the Queen, which was received and read at one of her audiences. She soon appeared to be affected by my misfortunes, and disposed to interfere in my behalf, when a courtier who came in at that moment, after listening to a part of the memorial, exclaimed that the whole was a tissue of absurd falsehoods, and that the hero of the romance was in no way entitled to the interest he labored to excite. At these words the memorial was closed, and dismissed as unworthy of attention. It was M. de Conflans, who by this hasty assertion prolonged my misery, and retarded my deliverance. I believe that his heart had no participation in the error of his judgment, and the regret he evinced, and the zeal he exerted to repair the mischief he had occasioned, may serve as a warning example to those who are often placed in a similar situation.

This last incident appeared completely to overthrow the exertions of my zealous adherents. The Queen was persuaded

that the tale of my sufferings was an invention, and the King had forbidden my name to be mentioned to him. Madam Legros, still indefatigable, hastened to M. de Conflans. She was admitted to an audience, and, in a conversation of three hours and a half, succeeded completely in convincing him of my innocence, and in engaging him to repair by the most ardent efforts the injury he had done me by his precipitancy.

At this epoch, a change occurred in the Ministry, from which my friends expected most favorable results. M. Amelot had been deceived by my persecutors; it was possible that his successor, M. de Breteuil, might not have been prejudiced against me, and it was resolved, if possible, to anticipate such an attempt. But this was not the only hope which, at this moment, reanimated my generous protectors. Madame Necker, even more illustrious by her virtues than by her rank and exalted station, had become fully informed of my situation, and of all I had undergone. She warmly espoused my cause, and expressed the most touching compassion, joined to a resolution to exert the utmost which her credit could effect to obtain my deliverance. She entered into a long correspondence with Madame Legros on the subject, and all their letters are now in my possession. This superior woman wished to remain unknown in the exercise of her benevolence; she was even anxious that I should not be told to whom I was indebted for my liberty, my happiness, and my life. If it is sweet to inspire gratitude, how much more necessary is it, to those who are sensible of such inestimable benefits, to relieve the heart by giving vent to its emotions!

I have never endeavored to ascertain by what means, or through what agency, Madame Necker was enabled to obtain the order for my liberation, which she with difficulty accomplished: on this subject she has herself preserved silence to all, and I ought not to incur the risk of offending my protectress, either by my indiscreet curiosity or my importunate acknowledgments. But let me record, with equal pride and satisfaction, the admiration and esteem which on all occasions she evinced for my first and constant friend, Madame Legros. In all the letters written while her hopes of ultimate success were more than balanced by her fears of failure,

Madame Necker expressed the warmest interest and compassion for my fate, enclosing generally a supply of money to relieve my most pressing necessities, and to furnish me with the means of sheltering my wretched person from the inclemency of the weather.

In the commencement of her mediation in my behalf, Madame Necker could only obtain a promise that I should be removed to a place of less rigorous confinement. It was at this precise time that my enemies invented the story of my extravagant letter to the King, of which she was anxious to receive my disavowal in my own handwriting. "I have perused," said she in a letter to Madame Legros, "the disavowal of poor Latude with much interest, and I hope to make a most favorable use of it."

The change in the Ministry was a fortunate occurrence, and she pointed out to Madame Legros the most effectual method of seconding her exertions. At length success attended them, and she lost not a moment in communicating the happy news; at the same time, she was distracted by apprehensions which she alluded to in the following terms: "The individual through whose powerful influence I have so long and ardently endeavored to achieve the object of our mutual solicitude, is in some measure apprehensive of the consequences: we fear lest the future conduct of our *protégé,* excited by the remembrance of his wrongs, should lead him into actions which may cause us to repent. I rely on your prudence and management, in a matter which really includes the happiness of my life, for, from reasons which are exclusively personal, I should suffer cruelly if M. de Latude were to excite any just cause of complaint against him, after the steps I have taken in his favor and the responsibility I have incurred. Since you have judged it proper to acquaint him with my name, and he has expressed himself fully sensible of the interest I have evinced, I entreat you to require from him, as the only token of his gratitude I shall ever have occasion to exact, his full and unqualified forgiveness of the many injuries he has sustained, and a profound silence on the subject of his enemies. This is the only course by which he can expect happiness, and it is absolutely essential to my tranquillity that he should adopt it. I leave this important matter entirely in your

hands, Madame, in the fullest confidence, and relying on the sentiments of esteem and attachment with which you have inspired me."

In all her letters to Madame Legros, she continually reiterated the same injunction, and strongly impressed upon her how much her own individual happiness was dependent upon the prudence and forbearance of my conduct. Madame Necker had declined receiving the personal acknowledgment of my gratitude, and never permitted me to infringe this rigorous order. I seize with eagerness an opportunity of publicly declaring my obligation, and offering this feeble tribute to her exalted virtues. But I have anticipated the course of events, and must return for a moment to my dungeon, where my enemies still retained me.

The Minister had signed the order for my liberation, and had communicated the circumstance to Madame Necker. The usual routine was to send the order to the office of the police, from whence it was transmitted at once to the prisoner. It will with difficulty be believed that M. Le Noir suppressed mine for *six weeks* after it had been officially expedited, and that, but for the bold and urgent representations of Madame Necker, I might have perished in the dungeon where he had no longer even the shadow of a pretense for detaining me.

At length, the hour so long and so vainly anticipated arrived, my prison gates were opened, my chains were taken off, and once more I mingled among my fellow-creatures. I rushed into the arms of my tried and zealous friend, Madame Legros; my happiness was pure, my tears flowed abundantly, and my transports of joy were, for once, unmingled with regret. But I soon discovered that her feelings were not in unison with mine, and that my relentless persecutors had contrived, even when I thought my happiness secure, to deceive me with the shadow, and to withhold the reality, of liberty. *I was exiled to Montagnac,* as the condition of my enfranchisement, and forbidden expressly to enter Paris. The same order directed me to commence my journey to Languedoc on the instant, and to report my arrival to the police officer of the district, who was held responsible for my future conduct; I was commanded never to leave the town without his permission, and to apprise him of my most trifling movements.

To compensate me for the loss of fortune, for the injustice I had so long endured, and for the protracted torments which had wasted my life, and to supply me with the means of continuing my wretched existence, the Government settled on me an annual pension of *four hundred livres.*[3] Madame Legros trembled, as she placed in my hands the fatal document; but she had been too long accustomed to brave and defeat my enemies, to yield at last without another effort to snatch their victim from their hands.

Having formed this resolution, she determined at once to attempt procuring the revocation of the order. But, in the meantime, it was necessary to dispose of me in some place where I might in safety await the result. I was forbidden to enter Paris; she was too prudent to disobey this mandate: if I were left by myself in a hotel in the neighborhood, she was fearful lest, in an unguarded moment, I might commit myself either by speech or action, and counteract the efforts of my friends. In this dilemma, she was compelled to solicit the singular favor of my being still allowed to remain for the present in the dungeons of Bicêtre. She applied immediately to Madame Necker, and to M. de Conflans, who had unintentionally done me an injury, and promised to repair it. She and her husband had bound themselves to become responsible in every respect for my future conduct, but, separated from me by a distance of two hundred leagues, as they would be by the clause of banishment, it was impossible that they could watch over me, and prevent the ebullitions of temper, or the natural dictates of long-suppressed indignation.

My enemies dreaded that I should seek revenge or redress by appealing to the public, and they were shaken by the warm instances of my self-imposed guardians. But they yielded, as on all other occasions, by slow and reluctant degrees. At first, they agreed that I should remain three days in Paris, and finally consented that I should reside in the capital, on condition of never appearing in the coffee-houses, on the public walks, or in any place of public amusement. These precautionary stipulations form a powerful commentary on the blindness of my persecutors, who forgot that their own

[3] About £15 sterling per annum.

fears condemned them, and proved the injustice of their conduct.

My generous friend had employed the entire night in soliciting and obtaining the new order which revoked the mandate for my exile: she returned home at two o'clock in the morning, exhausted with fatigue. She scarcely waited till the first break of day, but sent her husband and M. Girard to communicate to me her final success; she followed them almost immediately, and we found ourselves together. It was the 22nd of March, 1784, a day forever memorable in the history of my life, on which I entered upon my new existence. My friends embraced me by turns, we wept in concert, and our tears at length were unmixed with any fears or apprehensions for the future. The past appeared like a hideous dream; but it was over, and the prospect before us presented nothing but peace and tranquillity. I accompanied them to their humble dwelling, where I found an apartment prepared for me, and everything arranged as if I had been long expected. I gazed around me with almost infantine enjoyment; the most trifling object arrested my attention, and I found happiness and gratification in everything that presented itself.

My task approaches its termination; I have related all the striking circumstances of my history, with candor and with boldness; I have acquitted the debts of my heart, and uttered the sentiments with which gratitude has inspired me. But I have still a duty to perform, and I am not base enough to shrink from its fulfillment. It is not merely a common feeling of revenge that actuates me. When I behold my benefactors depriving themselves of the common necessaries of life to administer to my support, should I not be guilty of a most unworthy weakness if I hesitated to claim the rights I have acquired by so many and such powerful titles? My protectors, I know, neither ask nor expect anything at my hands; but ought I to sacrifice my delicacy to theirs? Or, because they are generous, shall I be ungrateful and unjust?

I have therefore considered it my solemn duty to precede the trial of my just claims by a narrative of the facts on which I rest them. I address myself to you, august representatives of the nation, which through your firmness expects to rise into a new existence, and to be amply revenged on the domestic

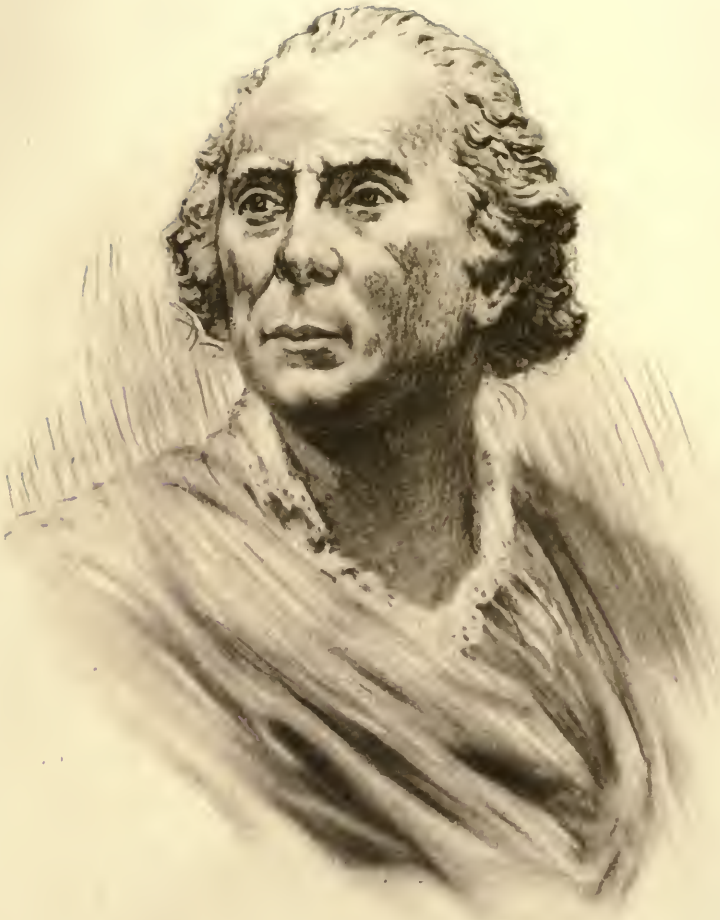
tyrants who have so long dissipated its resources and enervated its strength. What will be your sentiments, when, on examining the lists which should include none but the truest patriots, who have rendered real service to their country, you will find that my persecutors have settled on themselves, and on the companions of their crimes, enormous pensions? The income of M. de Sartine alone exceeds *ninety-one thousand livres;*[4] and in the same register, *stained with the blood of the people,* he has allowed himself the further sum of *two hundred thousand livres, to assist him in paying his debts.* On the other hand, to indemnify me for all I have suffered, I am allowed a pension of *four hundred livres,* while *two hundred and seventeen thousand* have been expended for the mere purpose of torturing me and re-plunging me in a dungeon. Surely, if any individual has a right to throw himself upon the justice and liberality of his countrymen, it is he to whom, for so long a space, they have refused the common protection which every citizen has a right to expect. I have implored it in vain for thirty-five years; I have invoked the laws, and have received my only replies from the despots who dishonored them. Deign then, august legislators, to listen to my feeble voice in the midst of the tumult by which you are surrounded; I call upon you in the name of reason and humanity, and I feel confident of being heard, because I appeal to men who are equally capable of appreciating the interests of the state and the happiness of every individual belonging to it.

I am well aware, that in arraigning my enemies before the public, I must confront them there, and be judged by the same tribunal. I have accused and convicted them, and their sentence is already pronounced. But I have also to prepare my own defense—not against these odious tyrants, who will tremble in my presence, and shrink abashed into silence when they behold their former victim—I have stated already the urgent entreaties of my benefactors, who called upon me, as the sole return for their good offices, to forget the injuries I had suffered, and to renounce the right of vengeance. I should have been guilty of the basest ingratitude, if I had disregarded these powerful injunctions. It was my duty, at that time, to yield to the wishes of my preservers:

[4] About $20,000.

our adversaries were all powerful, and appeared invulnerable; they were still protected by the fatal cuirass which turned aside the blows that were aimed against them. But the course of events has altered the situation of affairs, and the eyes of the nation are opened upon their real position. I am a citizen, and have no right to bind myself by any obligation which includes a defection from my duties to my country. My enemies are the common foes of the state, and my rights and injuries are become a portion of the public property. Every one owes a sacred debt to his country: it is thus I shall endeavor to discharge mine. I am now proud of all I have suffered, and will exhibit to my fellow-citizens, with just feelings of indignation, the marks of the chains I bore for so many years. I will say to them, "Behold what our common enemies have done! Watch them well, and be convinced that, if they had the power, they would do the same again."

THE END



JEAN JACQUES CASANOVA

AN ITALIAN ADVENTURER, THE MOST FASCINATING OF SCOUNDRELS

1725-1803

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

The eighteenth century was, par excellence, the century of adventurers; and Jean Casanova was, par excellence, the adventurer. He has left us his own record of his greatest adventure, his escape over the roofs of Venice. This is universally conceded the most daring of all prison escapes. It is told in the blasé, rather mocking, very self-satisfied style of the cavaliers of his day. Though the man was an unprincipled scoundrel, he was an entertaining one.

Casanova was born in Venice. His father was an actor and his mother an artist of great beauty. She seems also to have been possessed of common sense and gave her son the best of educations. She attempted to establish him in one profession after another, but in each case his intrigues with pretty women forced his resignation.

Casanova was frankly a libertine and rascal, but he was a scholar and a man of wit, combining in his own person all the vices and graces of the profligate eighteenth century. He would dine with the lords of the land, and wine in some vile gaming tavern where only thieves and rogues resorted. There is no book which gives a more entertaining and faithful picture of the manners and morals of the century in all classes and countries. For Casanova roamed the whole of Europe and was in turn publicist, abbé, diplomatist, soldier, fiddler, anything in short save a serious or persistent laborer.

From the time he began school in Padua until he was picked up at Paris an old man by Count Waldstein, Casanova had no thought but for himself, no occupation but gratifying his vile passions and vices. Never, in all his long, eventful life did he have one kindly thought or do one unselfish thing. He is perhaps the greatest, coolest egotist of all time. Yet he had the gift of making friends, a certain courage and wit, and a determined readiness to defend the peculiar thing which he called "his honor as a gentleman." Casanova's memoirs are the most reckless, devil-may-care of adventure tales. One is tempted to forget his more

disgraceful thoughts, and to laugh with him as a gay and prodigiously diverting scoundrel.

MEMOIRS

THIRTY-TWO years after the events here recorded, I have made up my mind to write the history of what befell me at the age of thirty, *nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita.*[1] The reason which moves me to write is the desire to relieve myself of the trouble of telling the story whenever any person of quality, or a friend of my own, requires or requests me to do so. A hundred times has it happened that, after repeating the tale, I have suffered in my health, either in consequence of the keen remembrance of these melancholy adventures, or from the actual physical fatigue of narrating all the details; and a hundred times have I resolved to write it. But various circumstances have hindered me; these all vanish now before the one reason which makes me take up my pen. I have, in fact, no longer sufficient strength to tell my story, nor, on the other hand, to tell those who are curious about it, and who urge me to tell it, that I have not the strength; for I would rather succumb to the dangerous consequences of the effort, than lay myself open to the odious suspicion of disobliging.

Here, then, is this famous history, which until now has never been communicated, save to my friends, ready to be made public. So be it. I have reached an age at which I must make even greater sacrifices to my health. To tell a story well, a man must need pronounce distinctly; a nimble tongue is not enough; teeth too are indispensable, for they are necessary to the utterance of certain consonants, which form above a third of the alphabet, and it is my misfortune to have lost mine. A man may write without teeth, but they are indispensable if he wishes to talk, to persuade.

CHAPTER I

HAVING completed my studies, after quitting Rome as a priest and embracing the military profession; after retiring from that also, at Corfu, and trying the business of a lawyer; after throwing this up in disgust, and after having traveled

[1] Half way through the journey of our life (*Dante*).

through Italy, Græcia Magna and Minor, Asia Minor, Constantinople, and the finest cities of France and Germany, I returned home in the year 1753, fairly well informed, full of myself, reckless, pleasure-loving, hating prudence, ready to talk at random on every subject, gay, bold, vigorous, and ready to laugh with my friends and my set, at everything I thought ridiculous, whether sacred or profane. All that was foreign to our wild youth I regarded as prejudice; I played high, turning night into day, and respected nothing on earth but honor—a word I always had on my lips, in pride rather than in courtesy—and was equally ready to defend my own from every stain; and to violate every law which might baulk me of satisfaction, compensation, or revenge for everything which I could interpret as an insult or an injury. I failed in my duty to no one; I did not disturb the peace of society; I never meddled in affairs of State or in private quarrels; and this was all the virtue I could boast of, regarding it as enough to protect me against any misfortune which could expose me to the loss of the liberty I deemed inviolable. When, from time to time, I surveyed my own conduct, I never failed to esteem it irreproachable, since, after all, my debaucheries made me guilty only in regard to myself, and no remorse weighed on my conscience. I believed that my sole duty was to be an honest man, and on this I prided myself; and as I needed, to enable me to live, neither employment nor place which might have crippled my freedom for a few hours in the day, or have required me to impress the public by my regular and edifying conduct, I could congratulate myself, and go my own way.

Monsieur de Bragadino, *Senator amplissime,* took charge of me; his purse was mine; he liked my character and my wit. After having, all through his youth, led a life of dissipation, the slave of every passion, an apoplectic fit pronounced the dreadful "Halt!" which, stopping him on the verge of the tomb, brought him to reason. Having recovered sufficiently to act for himself, while he despaired of attaining to old age even by the strictest living, he saw no alternative but to devote himself to religion, and make up for past vices by acts of virtue: he played his part in all good faith; seeing in me the counterpart

of himself he was filled with pity. He said I went at such a pace as could not fail to disenchant me before long, and he, therefore, would never cast me off. He expected that my passions would wear themselves out; but he did not live long enough to see the fulfillment of his hopes. He would always be giving me excellent moral lessons which I listened to with pleasure and admiration, and never tried to evade—this was all he asked of me. He kept me in good counsel and in money; what he never owned to me was that he incessantly prayed to the Almighty to let me see all the error of my ways.

In the month of March, 1755, I took lodgings in the house of a widow on the Quay, at Venice, known as the *Fondamento Nove (sic),* explaining to Signor de Bragadino that this change of residence was necessary to my health, since the summer was coming on, and in the great heat to which one is exposed in the middle of the town, I required to live in an airy quarter with windows facing the fresh breeze from the north. My friend, who always agreed to whatever I might wish, approved the plan, quite content with my promise to go to dine with him every day. The real reason of my quitting his palace was that I wished to live nearer to a young girl with whom I was in love. The story of this affair has, however, nothing to do with this narrative; so I spare my readers.

There was a certain Abbé Chiari, who some time before had written a satirical novel in which he had handled me scurvily enough. I had no reason to be pleased with him, and had explained myself to such effect that the Abbé, fearing a caning, was now on his guard. About this time I received an anonymous letter in which I was warned that instead of thinking of punishing the Abbé, I should do far better to consider my own safety, for that I was in imminent danger. Those who write anonymous letters deserve nothing but contempt; still it is well sometimes to take advantage of the counsels thus given. I failed to do so, and I was very wrong.

At the same period a fellow named Manuzzi, who had been a gem cutter, and was now a spy, a vile minion of the State Inquisitors, perfectly unknown to me, contrived to

make my acquaintance by offering to let me have diamonds on credit, which induced me to admit him to my lodgings. Looking at several books which lay strewn about, he paused to examine some treatises on Magic. Amused—like a fool—by his surprise, I showed him some which treated of raising the Elemental Spirits. My readers will do me the favor to believe that I had not the smallest faith in these formulas; but I had them, and they amused me, as do the thousand follies hatched in the brains of empty thinkers. A few days later this perfidious wretch came to tell me that a collector, whom he would not name, was willing to give me a thousand sequins for my five books, but that he must see them first to be sure that they were genuine. As he promised to return them in twenty-four hours, and as I really did not value them, I entrusted them to him. He did not fail to return them next day, saying that the gentleman believed them to be forgeries. Some years after I learnt that he carried them to the Secretary of the Inquisition of State, who thus discovered me to be a notorious magician.

Messer Antonio Condulmer, my enemy, since the Abbé Chiari's friend was at that time Inquisitor of State, took this opportunity of representing me to be a disturber of the public peace. An ambassador's secretary, with whom I was acquainted some years later, told me that a paid informer, supported by two witnesses—also hired, no doubt, by that dreadful tribunal—had accused me of believing in nothing but the devil, as if that absurd belief, supposing it to exist, did not necessarily involve the belief in God. These three worthies asserted on oath that when I lost at play, at the moment when every believer swears, I was never heard to execrate the devil. I was furthermore accused of eating meat every day, and of attending none but festival masses; and it was strongly suspected that I was a freemason. To this they added that I was constantly at the houses of foreign Ministers, and that living, as I did, with three patricians, I no doubt revealed all the secrets of State I succeeded in extracting, in return for the large sums I was known to lose.

All these charges, for none of which was there any foundation, were a sufficient pretext for my being treated by the Tribunal as an enemy of my country, a conspirator of the

first magnitude. For some weeks certain persons whom I might have trusted, had been advising me to travel abroad, since the Tribunal had an eye on me. This was enough; for the only persons who can live in peace at Venice are such as are ignored by the fatal Tribunal; but I persisted in scorning all the obvious inferences. If I had listened to the hints that were given me I should have been uneasy; and I was a foe to all uneasiness. I said to myself, "I have no remorse on my conscience, so I cannot be guilty; and if I am innocent I have nothing to fear." I was a fool. This was reasoning as though I were a free man.

In the month of July, 1755, the odious Tribunal ordered *Messer Grande* (the title given to the chief of the Archers of the Republic) to capture me alive or dead. This was the regular and merciless formula of every order issued by the terrible Triumvirate for the apprehension of a victim; even its lightest orders are issued on pain of death to those who infringe them.

On July 25th, about a quarter of an hour before sunrise, I quitted the *Erbaria* to go home to bed. The *Erbaria* is a part of the quay by the Grand Canal close to the Rialto Bridge, and is so called because a market is held there of pot-herbs, fruits, and flowers. Men, and women too, who have spent the night in the pleasures of the table, or the mad excitement of gaming, are in the habit of taking a turn there before going home to bed. This early promenade shows how completely the character of a nation may change. The Venetians of yore, so mysterious alike in politics and in love-affairs, have disappeared before the modern generation, whose most marked taste is to make no mystery of anything. The spot itself presents a fine prospect, but that is no more than a pretext. Those who frequent the *Erbaria* go to be seen rather than to see, and it is more popular with women than with men. It is the dawn of a new day, but that no one recognizes; it is the close of yesterday.

After walking up and down for half an hour I went home, and, believing that every one was in bed, I took out my key to unlock the door; to my great surprise this was unnecessary, for I found it open, and, what is more, the bolt was broken away. On going upstairs I met all the household up, and

my landlady venting the bitterest complaints. Messer Grande, she told me, followed by a troop of men-at-arms, had forced his way in. He had turned everything upside down, saying that he was in search of a trunk which was said to be full of salt, a contraband article. He knew that a trunk had been brought in the day before; this was true, but it belonged to Count Securo, and contained only his linen and clothes. On seeing this Messer Grande had gone away. He had also searched my bedroom. She declared she would have some compensation, and I, thinking she had good cause, promised to speak of it to Signor Bragadino.

Being greatly in need of rest, I went to bed. I had been playing high all night, and losing heavily. Being very restless, which I attributed to the irritation caused by my losses, I rose three or four hours later, and went to that gentleman's house; to him I related the whole business, urging him to insist on a handsome indemnity, and representing all my good landlady's grounds for demanding a compensation in proportion to the offense; since the law guaranteed the inviolability of every family not suspected of crime.

My speech greatly saddened the three friends, and the wise old man, with a calm, but grave look, told me that he would answer me after dinner. De la Haye also dined with us, but during the meal, which was very dull, he did not utter a word. His silence ought to have struck me as ominous, if I had not been under the sway of a malignant spirit, which hindered me from making the most ordinary use of my wits; as to the sadness of my three friends, I attributed it to their regard for me.

My intimacy with these three excellent men had always been a matter of astonishment to all the town, and as it was agreed that it could not be natural, it must be the result of some magic art. These three gentlemen were virtuous and devout in the extreme; I was anything rather than devout, nor was there in Venice a more incorrigible libertine than I. "Virtue," it was said, "may be indulgent towards vice, but they can enter into no alliance."

Dinner ended, Signor Bragadino led me to his private room with his two friends, who were never in the way, and told me very coolly that instead of dreaming of revenge for the

affront done by Messer Grande to the house where I lodged, I ought to be thinking of my own safety. "The trunk full of salt or gold, my dear fellow," said he, "is but a pretext. It is you they were seeking, and hoped to find. As your good genius contrived that they should miss you, fly; tomorrow, perhaps, it will be too late. I was Inquisitor of State myself for eight months, and I know the kind of captures which the Tribunal orders. A door is not beaten down for the sake of a trunk full of salt. It is possible that knowing you to be out they went to your lodgings then on purpose to give you time to escape. Believe me, my dear boy, set out at once for Fusina, and from there go as soon as you can to Florence, and stay there till I write to you that you can return without danger. If you have no money I will give you a hundred sequins for present use. Consider, prudence requires that you should depart."

Blind that I was, I replied that as I was conscious of no guilt I need not fear the Tribunal, and consequently, though I acknowledged the prudence of his advice, I could not follow it.

"The Tribunal," he replied, "may find you guilty of real or imaginary crimes, of which it will tell you nothing. Ask your oracle whether you should follow my advice or no."

I declined, knowing how absurd it was, but to give some color to my refusal I said that I never inquired of it but when I was in doubt. Finally, as a decisive reason, I said that by going away I should give evidence of a fear which would make me seem guilty; for an innocent person, having nothing on his conscience, would not in reason feel any alarm whatsoever.

"Since silence," said I, "is the soul of that dreadful Tribunal, after my departure it will be impossible for you ever to know whether I have done well or ill in taking flight. The prudence which, as your Excellency thinks, requires me to fly, will equally forbid me to return. Must I, then, bid an eternal farewell to my native city, and to all I love?"

Then, as a last hope, he tried to induce me at least to spend the day and night at his palace. I still am ashamed of having refused this request of a worthy old man, to whom I owed so much affection and gratitude, for the palace of a

patrician of Venice is sacred to the archers, who would never dare to cross the threshold without a special order from the Tribunal—an order which is never given. I should have escaped a great misfortune, and have spared the old man a very real pang.

I was much moved at seeing him weep, and perhaps I should have yielded to his tears all that I persistently refused to his entreaties and to reason.

"In pity's sake," said I, "spare me the sight of your tears."

At once recovering his firmness he made some remarks, and then, with a smile full of affection, he embraced me, saying: "Perhaps, my dear fellow, I may never see you again: *Fata viam inveniunt.*"[2]

I embraced him warmly and left him; but his prediction was fulfilled, for I never saw him again; he died eleven years later. I found myself outside without a qualm of fear. I presently went home, and, having consoled my landlady by every means I could think of, I went to bed. It was the night of the 25th of July, 1755.

Next morning at dawn the terrible Messer Grande came into my room. To wake, to see him, and to hear his inquiry as to whether I were Jacques Casanova was the work of a moment. To my reply that "Yes, I was Casanova," he commanded me to rise and dress, and to give him everything I had in the way of written papers of my own or other persons, and to follow him.

"By whose authority do you give me these orders?"

"By that of the Tribunal."

CHAPTER II

WHAT is the power which certain words possess over the mind, and who can trace its source? I, who only the day before was boasting of my courage as founded on my innocence, stood petrified by the word Tribunal, and had not even the mechanical faculty of passive obedience.

My desk was open; all my papers were lying on a table I used for writing on.

"Take them," I said to the emissary of the dreadful

[2] Fate knows our path.

Tribunal, pointing to the papers which lay on the table. He filled a sack with them, and put it in charge of a man-at-arms; he then told me that I must deliver up certain bound manuscripts which I must undoubtedly have. I showed him the place where they lay, and this opened my eyes. I clearly saw that I had been betrayed by the wretch Manuzzi, who as I have said, had been to my lodgings under pretense of selling these books. They were "La Clavicule de Salomon," "Zecor Ben," and others of the same kind, with full "Instructions as to the planetary hours," and the necessary formulas for calling up demons of every degree. Those who knew that I had these books believed me to be a great magician, and I was not sorry.

Messer Grande took the books that lay on my bed-table, such as Petrarca, Ariosto, Horace, "Le Philosophe Militaire" —a manuscript which had been given to me—and other books of which Manuzzi had revealed the possession, for Messer Grande asked me for them. This spy had the look of an honest man, a necessary qualification for the trade he plied.

While Messer Grande was thus investigating my books, I dressed myself mechanically, neither quickly nor slowly. I shaved and did my hair; I put on a shirt with ruffles and my fine laced coat, without thinking of what I was doing or speaking a word, and without Messer Grande, who never lost sight of me for an instant, making any demur to my dressing as though I were going to a wedding.

On quitting my room I was surprised to see a company of thirty or forty archers; they had done me the honor of thinking them requisite to secure my person, while two would have been enough according to the maxim, *Ne Hercules quidem contra duos.* It is singular enough that in London, where every one is brave, only one man is employed to arrest another; while in my native city of Venice, where most men are cowards, thirty are insufficient. It is, perhaps, because a coward when he is the assailant is more frightened than the coward who is attacked; and this may sometimes make an habitual coward a brave man on occasion. It is a certain fact that at Venice a single man has been seen to defend himself against twenty sbirri, and escape at last, after having thrashed them. I remember having helped a friend of mine

in Paris to get away from the clutches of forty runners, and we put the whole posse to rout.

Messer Grande made me get into a gondola, where he took his seat by my side, with an escort of four men. Having reached his house he offered me coffee, which I refused, and then locked me into a room. There I remained for four hours, dozing at intervals.

At about three o'clock the captain of the archers came in and told me that he was instructed to consign me to the rooms under the leads. I followed him without a word. We got into a gondola, and after a thousand twists and turns in the smaller canals, we came out on the Grand Canal, and disembarked on the quay by the prisons. We mounted endless stairs and crossed a covered bridge[3] which connects the Ducal Palace with the prisons, across the canal called Rio di Palazzo. Beyond the bridge was a corridor, along which we went, and through one room into another, where he presented me to a man wearing a patrician's robe, who, after staring at me from head to foot, said, "This is he. Keep him safe."

This official was the Secretary to the Inquisition, *il circospetto,* Domenico Cavalli, who apparently was ashamed to speak Venetian before me, for he pronounced my sentence in good Tuscan. Messer Grande, on this, consigned me to the care of the jailer of the *Piombi,* who stood by, carrying a huge bunch of keys and attended by two men-at-arms, and who led me up two narrow stairs, along a little passage, then through another, shut off by a locked door, and then again down a corridor with a door at the end, which he opened, and I found myself in a filthy attic about six fathoms long by two wide, and lighted by a window high up in the roof. This, I supposed, was to be my prison; but I was mistaken. The man picked out a huge key, opened a thick door three feet and a half high, lined with a sheet of iron, with a hole in the middle, eight inches in diameter, and desired me to go in.

While he was opening this door I was curiously studying a contrivance in iron riveted to the metal plate, and in form like a horse-shoe, one inch thick, with a space of about five

[3] Known as the Bridge of Sighs.

inches between its two ends. I was wondering what this could be when the warder said to me with a smile:

"I see that you are trying to guess the use of this machine, and I can inform you. When their Excellencies give orders that any one is to be strangled, he is made to sit down on a stool with his back to this collar, and his head is so placed that it encircles half his neck; then a twist of silk which encircles the other half has the two ends threaded through this hole and attached to a drum, which a man turns till the victim's soul is gone to God—for the confessor, God be praised, never leaves him till he is dead."

"Mighty ingenious," said I, "and it strikes me, sir, that you yourself have the honor of turning the wheel."

To this he made no reply, but signed to me to go in, which I did, bending very low. He locked me in, and then asked me through the grating what I would have to eat, and I told him I had not yet thought about it; so he went off, locking all the doors.

Amazed and dismayed, I rested my elbows on the top of the grating; it was two feet square, crossed by six iron bars an inch thick, which made sixteen openings of five inches square. The dungeon would, therefore, have been light enough but for a quadrangular joist a foot and a half thick supporting the timbers of the roof, inserted into the wall just below the window, which was obliquely in front of me. This beam intercepted the daylight, which might otherwise have shone into the hideous garret.

I made my way round my dreadful prison, which was only five feet and a half high, so I had to bend my head; and I found out, by feeling rather than by sight, that it was L shaped, forming three quarters of a square, about two fathoms each way. The recess corresponding to the missing quarter would have served to contain a bed, but I found no bed there, nor seat, nor table, nor furniture of any kind but a pail, and a shelf a foot wide fastened to the wall at four feet from the ground. There I deposited my fine silk cloak, my smart coat, so lucklessly hanseled, and my hat with its bordering of Spanish point and white feather. The heat was excessive. Sad and pensive, I instinctively went to the grating, the one spot where I could lean on my elbows. I could

not see the window; but I saw the light which fell into the attic, and rats of enormous size quite at home there. These hideous brutes, of which I had a horror, came close up under the grating without a sign of fear. I instantly closed the opening with the inner shutter; it curdled my blood to think of a visit from them. I sank into deep abstraction, my arms crossed on the rest they had found, and there I remained for eight hours, motionless and speechless, without even stirring a finger.

At the sound of the clock striking twenty-one[4] I roused myself, beginning to feel somewhat uneasy at seeing no one come to bring me food, or the furniture I should need to enable me to go to bed. I thought they would at least have brought me a chair, some bread, and some water. I had no appetite, but how should they know that? and never in my life had my mouth been so parched and bitter. However, I made sure that some one would appear before the end of the day; but when I heard twenty-four strike I was furious. I struck out, stamped my feet, cursed, and shouted an accompaniment to the vain uproar I was prompted to make by my strange situation. After more than an hour of this crazy display, seeing no one, and nothing happening to indicate that my outcry had been heard, plunged in darkness too, I closed the grating for fear the rats should come through into my dungeon, and threw myself at full length on the floor. Such barbarous desertion seemed to me unnatural, and I made up my mind that the cruel Inquisitors had doomed me to death.

My self-examination as to what I could have done to merit such a fate was not a long one, for after the most scrupulous investigation of my actions I did not detect anything which could condemn me. I was a libertine, a gambler, a bold speaker, and in the habit of thinking only how I might best enjoy life as it passed; but in all this I discerned no State crime. Still, at finding myself treated as a criminal, I was boiling with rage and despair against the abominable despotism which oppressed me. Nevertheless, neither the excitement of my temper, the hunger I was beginning to feel,

[4] About five in the afternoon in July. The Italians used to count twenty-four hours in the day, from sunset to sunset.

the thirst which consumed me, nor the hardness of the boards on which I lay, could hinder exhausted nature from asserting its rights, and I fell asleep.

My vigorous constitution needed sleep, and in a young and healthy man this imperious necessity silences every other; in that sense, above all, sleep may be called the first blessing of man.

The toll of midnight awoke me. How frightful is the awakening which brings regret for the illusions of blank forgetfulness! I could not believe that I had passed three hours without a pang. I was lying on my left side, and without turning I put out my right arm to find my handkerchief, which I remembered having placed on the left. I felt about—God help me! What horror when my hand grasped another as cold as ice! Fear electrified me from top to toe, and my hair stood on end.

Never in my life have I felt such terror, and I never should have believed myself capable of it. I lay for two or three minutes scarcely conscious, not merely motionless but incapable of thought. Recovering myself a little, I did myself the justice to think that the hand I fancied I had touched was merely the outcome of my tortured imagination, and in this hope I again put out my hand and again grasped the other. Frozen and trembling with dread I gave a piercing shriek, and flinging aside the hand I held I withdrew my own with a shudder.

Presently, feeling somewhat calmer and capable of reflection, I made up my mind that during my sleep a corpse had been laid by my side. I was sure that it had not been there when I lay down. "It is the body," thought I, "of some poor wretch who has been strangled, and they thus give me warning of the fate in reserve for me."

This thought maddened me. I became furious, and terror giving way to rage, for the third time I put out my arm to touch the icy hand; I seized it to assure myself of the hideous fact, and trying to rise leaned on my left elbow, when I discovered that it was my own left hand that I had clutched. Numbed by the weight of my body, and by the hardness of the boards which formed my feather-bed, it had lost all warmth, movement, and sensation.

In spite of the comic side of this adventure it did not add to my cheerfulness; on the contrary, it gave rise to the most gloomy reflections. I perceived that I was in a place where, if what was false would appear true, truth might appear false; where the intellect might lose half its prerogative, and where disordered fancy might make reason the victim of chimerical hopes or dark desperation. I determined to be on my guard in this matter, and for the first time in my life, at the age of thirty I called philosophy to my aid, for I had its germs in my soul, though I had never yet had occasion to make use of it.

I believe that the greater part of mankind die without ever having thought; and this not so much for lack of wits and sense, as because the shock needed to spur the thinking faculty has never been given by some extraordinary event opposed to their daily habits.

The utter silence of the place—the hell of living humanity—was broken by the creak of bolts in the vestibules and corridors which led to my prison.

"Have you had time to consider what you will eat?" my jailer called out through the wicket in a harsh voice.

It is well for the victim when the insolence of so vile a being is displayed only under the mask of mockery! I replied that I wished for rice soup, some boiled beef, a roast, some bread, some wine and some water. I perceived that the turnkey was astonished at not hearing the complaints he expected. He went away, and returned in about a quarter of an hour to say that he wondered I had not asked for books or necessary furniture. "For," he added, "if you flatter yourself you were put here for one night only, you are greatly mistaken."

"Then bring me whatever you consider necessary."

"Where am I to go for it? Here are a pencil and paper; write it all down."

I wrote the address whither he was to go for my shirts, stockings, and other clothes, a bed, a table, and a chair; and for the books of which Messer Grande had deprived me, paper, pens, &c. On my reading him the list—for the turnkey could not read—"Strike it out, sir, strike them out. Put your pencil through books, paper, pens, looking-glass, razors.

All these are forbidden fruit. And then give me some money to pay for your dinner." I had three sequins; I gave him one and he departed. He spent an hour in the galleries, busy —as I afterwards learnt—in serving seven other prisoners shut up in remote garrets, as far from each other as possible, to prevent any communication between them.

At about noon the jailer reappeared, followed by five archers, told off to wait on the State prisoners. He opened my prison door to bring in the furniture I had asked for, and my dinner. The bed was placed in the alcove; my dinner was set on a little table with my dinner things—consisting of an ivory spoon which he had bought for me—forks, knives, and all cutting instruments being forbidden.

"Order what you want to eat to-morrow," said he, "for I can only come here once a day, at sunrise. The *illustrissimo Signor,* the Secretary, has bidden me tell you that he will send you some books suitable for your reading. Those you have asked for are prohibited."

"Thank him for the favor he has done me in putting me by myself."

"I will do as you desire me; but you are foolish to make game of him."

"I am not making game of him, for it seems to me better to be alone than in the company of the scoundrels who must be incarcerated here."

"What, sir, scoundrels! I should be sorry to think so. There are none but honest folks whom it has been necessary to cut off from society for reasons which their Excellencies alone know. You have been placed in solitude to punish you more severely, and do you wish me to return thanks on your part?"

"I did not know that."

The ignorant fellow was right, and I was not long in finding it out. I discovered that a solitary prisoner cannot possibly find any occupation; alone in a dark room where he never sees, or can hope to see any one, excepting, once a day, the man who brings him his food, and which he cannot walk across without stooping, he is the most miserable of mortals. He longs for hell—if he believes in it—only to have some society. This longing is so paramount

that I wished for that of an assassin, of an infectious patient, of a bear. Solitude in confinement is heartbreaking; but to believe this, knowledge by experience is perhaps requisite, and I would not wish even my enemies such experience. If a man of letters, in my situation, is allowed ink and paper, his misery diminishes by nine-tenths; but the ruffians who persecuted me did not wish to alleviate my lot.

When the jailer was gone I carried my table close to the hole in the door to get a little light, and sat down to my dinner, but I could only swallow a few mouthfuls of soup. Having fasted for nigh on forty-eight hours, no wonder that I was sick. I spent the day sitting in my armchair, without raging any more, and preparing my mind for reading the books they had graciously promised me. I never shut an eye all night, hindered by the horrible clatter made by the rats, and by the deafening noise of the clock of St. Mark's, which seemed to be in the room itself. But these two torments were not the worst I had to endure, and I doubt whether many of my readers have any clear conception of that of which I have to speak: the millions of fleas which disported themselves to their hearts' content all over my body. These little insects sucked my blood with indescribable persistency and avidity; their incessant pricking threw me into convulsions, gave me spasmodic writhing, and poisoned all my blood.

At daybreak, Lorenzo—that was my jailer's name—came and had my bed made and my room swept and cleaned, and one of his underlings brought me some water to wash myself. I wanted to go for a turn in the larger attic, but Lorenzo told me that it was forbidden. He gave me two big books which I abstained from opening, not feeling sure that I could contain the first impulse of indignation which they would probably occasion, and which the spy would certainly have reported to his masters. Having left my food and two cut lemons, he departed.

When I was alone I made haste to eat my soup while it was hot; then I went to the light with one of the books and found, to my delight, that it was possible to read. I looked at the title and read, "The Mystic City, by Sister Maria de Jesus, of Agrada." I had never heard of it. The other was

by a Jesuit named *Caravita.* This canting wretch—as they all are—argued for a new "Adoration of the Sacred Heart of our Lord." . . .

At the end of nine or ten days I had no money left. Lorenzo asked me for some—I had none.

"Where can I go for some?"

"Nowhere."

The thing in me which most annoyed this fellow, ignorant, gossiping, greedy, and inquisitive, was my paucity and brevity of speech.

On the following day he told me that the Tribunal had allowed me fifty sous [5] a day; that he was to keep it in hand, but that he would account for the money once a month and spend the savings in any way I might dictate.

"Then bring me twice a week the *Leyden Gazette.*"

"Impossible; it is not allowed."

Sixty-five francs a month was more than enough, as I could not eat; the great heat and the inanition produced by lack of nourishment had worn me out. We were in the dog-days; the power of the sun, which shone vertically over my prison, kept me as it were in an oven, to such a point indeed that the sweat which ran off my hapless body dripped on to the floor on each side of the armchair in which I was obliged to sit without a stitch upon me.

I had languished for a fortnight in this hell on earth, when I was seized with a violent feverish attack, and took to my bed. I said nothing of this to Lorenzo; but two days later, seeing that I had not touched the food he had brought me, he asked me how I was.

"Quite well."

"That, sir, is impossible, for you eat nothing. You are ill, and you will see that the splendid liberality of the Tribunal will furnish you gratis with a doctor, a surgeon, and physic."

He went away and returned three hours later, without an attendant, carrying a candle and leading the way for a solemn personage who was the doctor. I was in a burning fever which had not left me for three days. He came up to me and questioned me. I told him that I never spoke to

[5] About two shillings; but the value was practically higher.

my confessor or my doctor excepting we were alone together. The doctor desired Lorenzo to leave the room, but Argus refused, and the physician left me saying I was likely to die. This was what I most desired, for life as it was then was not the supreme good. I also felt some satisfaction in reflecting that my death might perhaps compel my pitiless persecutors to reflect on the inhumanity of the horrible treatment to which they had subjected me.

Four hours later I again heard the clatter of bolts, and a doctor came in carrying a light; Lorenzo remained outside. I was in a state of such utter prostration that it was in itself a real rest. Beneficent Nature has exempted man when really ill from the torment of *ennui.* I was delighted to see my base guardian outside, for since his explanation of the iron collar I had a perfect horror of him.

It took me less than a quarter of an hour to tell the doctor everything.

"If you wish to get well," said he, "you must banish melancholy."

"Write the prescription, and take it to the only apothecary who can make it up. M. Cavalli is the bad physician who gave me two such books to read."

"Such drugs might very well give you a fever. I will not desert you."

He went away after mixing with his own hands a large jug of lemonade, of which he desired me to drink frequently. I spent the night in dozing, and dreaming of a thousand mystical absurdities.

Next day he came again with Lorenzo and a surgeon who bled me. He left some physic to be taken that evening, and a bottle of broth.

"I have procured you permission," said he, "to move into the outer attic, where the heat is less and the air less stifling than here."

"I must decline the favor, for I abominate the rats, which you did not know of, and which would certainly run over my bed."

"How horrible! I told M. Cavalli that he had nearly killed you with his books; he desired me to return them to him, and to give you Boetius. Here it is."

"I am very much obliged to you. That is better than Seneca. It will do me good."

He paid me four visits and pulled me through; my constitution did the rest, and I recovered my appetite. By the beginning of September I was quite well, and suffered no real distress but from the terrific heat, the rats, and dullness; for I could not be always reading Boetius.

One day Lorenzo told me that I had leave to quit my dungeon and wash, while my bed was made and the room swept. I took advantage of this permission to take some exercise during the ten minutes while the operation lasted, and as I walked violently to and fro, the dismayed rats did not dare to show. That same day Lorenzo gave me an account of my moneys, and it proved that he owed me thirty francs which I was not allowed to pocket. I left them in his hands, desiring him to pay for masses, and fully persuaded that he would make some very different use of them; indeed he thanked me in a tone of such satisfaction as proved that he himself would be the priest. I did the same every month but I never had any receipt from the mass-priest. Lorenzo did well to hold the celebration at the tavern; the money was of use to some one at any rate.

CHAPTER III

To enable the reader to understand my flight from such a place as these *Piombi,* I must make him acquainted with the locality. These attics under the leads, in which State prisoners are incarcerated, are nothing else than the lofts at the top of the Ducal Palace, and derive their name from the sheets of lead which form the roof. The only entrance is either through the Palace doors, or through the State prisons, or again by the Bridge of Sighs already mentioned. The way up leads through the room where the Inquisitors of State sit, and the Secretary alone keeps the key, which he hands over to the jailer only for the short time—very early in the morning—during which he waits on the prisoners. This duty is performed at daybreak, because the archers coming and going later in the day would be seen by the persons who should happen to have business with the Council of Ten; since this assembly meets daily in an adjoining room

called La Bussola, and the archers necessarily pass through it every time they have been up to the attics.

These prisons are divided on the opposite sides of the Palace, three to the west—mine was one of these—and three to the east. The gutter of the roof on the western side runs down into the court-yard; the other is exactly over the canal called Rio di Palazzo. On that side the dungeons are very light, and high enough to stand upright in, which is not the case in the prison where I was confined, known as the *Trave,* from the huge beam which cut off my light. The floor of my cell was exactly above the ceiling of the Inquisitors' room, where they commonly met only at night after the daily sitting of the Council of Ten, of which all three are also members.

Knowing the locality as well as I did, and the regular habits of the Inquisitors, the only means of escape, or at any rate the only means I thought likely to succeed, was to pierce through the floor of my room; but I could not do this without tools, and that was a difficulty in a place where all communication with the outer world was forbidden, and where no visits or letter-writing were allowed. To bribe an archer would have needed a large sum, and I had no money. Supposing even that the jailer and his two men would have allowed me to throttle them—for I had no weapon but my hands—there was always a third man-at-arms on guard at the door of the corridor, which he kept locked, and only opened when a comrade wishing to leave gave him the password. In spite of all these obstacles the only thing I thought of was how to escape, and I found nothing to help me in Boetius. I ceased to study him. Meanwhile, as I was persuaded that the only way to hit upon some plan was to think of it unceasingly, I never allowed myself to think of anything else.

I have always believed that when a man has firmly set his heart on accomplishing a thing, and devotes his mind exclusively to the pursuit of his aim, he must attain it in spite of every difficulty; such a man may become Grand Vizir or Pope; he may overthrow a monarchy, provided he sets to work while he is young and has the necessary wit and perseverance; but a man who has grown old scorned

by Fortune can achieve nothing, and without her help he can hope for no success. To triumph he must be able to trust to good fortune and laugh at failure; but it is the most difficult of political enterprises.

About the middle of November, Lorenzo told me that Messer Grande had a prisoner on his hands, and that the new secretary, whose name was Businello, had given orders that he was to be put in the worst prison cell, so that in consequence he was to share mine. He assured me that having told the Secretary that I regarded it as a favor to be in solitary confinement, that gentleman had replied that I was probably wiser after four months' residence there. This news did not distress me, nor was I sorry to hear of the change of secretary. This Signor Pietro Businello had been a very honest man when I knew him in Paris, on his way to London as a representative of the Venetian Republic.

In the afternoon of that day I heard the grinding of locks, and Lorenzo, followed by two archers, led in a young man bathed in tears, and after removing his handcuffs locked him in with me, and went away without a word. I was on my bed, where he could not see me. His amazement amused me. Being so fortunate as to measure seven or eight inches less than I, he could stand upright, and he gazed contemplatively at my arm-chair, which he no doubt supposed to be intended for his use. Raising his eyes to the level of the grating, he perceived the volume of Boetius, took it up, opened it, and flung it aside, because, being in Latin, he could not read it. Continuing his tour of inspection, he worked round to the left, feeling his way, and was surprised to lay hands on some clothes; presently he came to the alcove, and putting out his hand touched me, and apologized respectfully. I begged him to be seated, and we were acquainted at once.

"Who are you?" I asked.

"Maggiorini of Vicenza. My father was a coachman to the Poggiana family; he kept me at school till I was eleven years old, and then I was apprenticed for five years to a wig-maker, with whom I learnt my business thoroughly. On leaving him I became valet to Count X. I had been two years in his service when his only daughter quitted the convent. It was my duty to dress her hair, and presently I fell

in love with her, inspiring her with a passion equal to my own. After having vowed mutual fidelity a hundred times we took measures for flight. She pocketed a large sum of money, and some diamonds which had belonged to her late mother, the Countess. We were to have set out to-night for Milan. But yesterday after dinner the Count sent for me, and giving me a letter, told me to start at once and deliver it into the hand of the person whose address it bore, in Venice. He spoke so kindly and quietly that I never could have had the smallest suspicion of the fate he had in store for me. I went to fetch my cloak, and as I passed I took leave of my young lady, assuring her that I should soon return. She, more keen-sighted than I, and perhaps suspecting my misfortune, fainted away.

"I arrived here in all speed and hastened to deliver the fatal letter. I was kept waiting for the reply, and as soon as I had it I went to a tavern to take some refreshment, meaning to return forthwith and rejoin my lady; but as I stepped out of the wine-shop I was arrested and led off to the lock-up, where I remained till I was brought here. And indeed, sir, I may surely regard the young Countess as my wife?"

"There you are mistaken."

"Nature herself——"

"Nature herself, if we are deaf to all else, leads a man to commit many follies—till he is safe under the leads."

"And I am under the leads?"

"As I am."

My poor youth began to shed bitter tears, and in his weeping and lamentations there was no thought of self; all his grief was for his lady-love. He believed that the jailer would return to bring him a bed and some food; but I undeceived him, and offered him some of my provisions. His heart was too full to allow him to take any nourishment. At night I lent him a straw mattress to place on the floor, and the next evening one was supplied him.

They also served him a miserable dinner, allowed him by the tribunal as a favor or in charity—for the word justice would seem to be unknown to that fearful assembly. I told Lorenzo that my dinner would be enough for both, and

that he might spend whatever was allowed him for the young man in masses after his own heart. This he willingly undertook, and after congratulating the lad on being housed with me, he told us we might walk in the attic for half an hour. I found this exercise most favorable to my health and to my schemes for escape, though I could not put them into practice till eleven months later.

At the further end of this den of rats, I saw a quantity of old furniture flung on the floor to the right and left of two large cases, and in front of them a pile of papers stitched into pamphlet form. I took a dozen of these to amuse myself with reading them; these were some two or three centuries old, and their style and picture of manners gave me a few hours' entertainment. Among the lumber on the floor I saw a warming-pan, a kettle, a fire-shovel, tongs, and some old candlesticks. From this I inferred that some illustrious prisoner had been lodged there and allowed the indulgence of using these things. But what chiefly attracted my interest was a bolt, quite straight, as thick as my thumb, and a foot and a half long. I touched nothing, for time had not sufficiently ripened my plans for me to decide on anything in particular.

One morning, at the end of the month, my companion was fetched away, and Lorenzo informed me that he had been removed to certain prisons called *i Quattri.* These prisons are in the ordinary prison building, and belong to the State Inquisitors. The prisoners confined there are privileged to call the jailer when they want him. They are dark, so the prisoners are allowed the use of an oil-lamp. There is no fear of fire, for they are built entirely of marble. I learnt a long time after that poor Maggiorini remained there five years, and when he came out was sent for ten more to Cerigo. Whether he ever came out again I know not. He had been very good company, as I discovered when he was gone, for I soon sank into melancholy once more.

I was, however, so fortunate as not to be deprived of my half-hour's walk in the attic. I took to observing more exactly the things it contained. One of the cases was full of good paper, cardboards, uncut pens, and balls of string; the other was nailed down. A piece of polished black marble,

an inch thick, six inches long by three wide, caught my eye. This I took possession of without knowing exactly what I should do with it, and I hid it in my cell, taking care to cover it with my shirts.

A week after Maggiorini's removal, Lorenzo told me that to all appearance I should ere long have another companion. This man, who after all was nothing worse than a chatterbox, was out of all patience at finding that I never asked him any questions. As a matter of duty, he ought never to have talked to me; but where is a man of perfect infamy to be found! There are some, but happily they are few, and it is not among the lower orders that these are to be met with. Thus my jailer, as I gave him no opportunity for displaying his discretion, fancied that as I asked him nothing it was because I supposed that he knew nothing, and this piqued his conceit; to show me that I was mistaken, he began to gossip without being asked.

"I fancy, sir," said he, "that you will often have visitors, for the six other dungeons each contain two persons who are not of the sort to be sent down to the *Quattri.*"

On the following day I received another messmate, who was treated the first day as Maggiorini had been; and this made me see the necessity of procuring another ivory spoon, for as new-comers had no supplies I was obliged to do the honors of the house.

My new companion made me a very low bow, for my beard, which was now four inches long, was even more imposing than my height. Lorenzo often lent me a pair of scissors to trim my nails, but he was forbidden under the severest penalties to allow me to touch my beard. I do not know the reason, but I had ended by becoming used to my beard, as one does to everything.

The new-comer was a man of about fifty and about the same figure as myself, stooping a little, and very thin, with a large mouth and villainous teeth. He had small gray eyes under bushy red brows which made him look like a screech owl, the whole set off by a little black horsehair wig, smelling of very nasty oil, and a gray cloth coat.

He accepted my dinner, but was very cautious, and never spoke a word to me all day. I was equally taciturn, con-

vinced that he would soon find his tongue—as indeed he did the following day.

Early in the morning a bed was brought in which belonged to him, and a bag full of linen. The jailer asked him, as he had asked me, what he would have for dinner, and for some money to pay for it.

"I have no money."

"What, a rich fellow like you, and no money?"

"I have not a sou."

"Very well; then I will bring some army biscuit and some water. Those are my orders." He went away, and returned with a pound and a half of biscuit and a jug of water, set it down before the man, and having locked the door, disappeared.

Left alone with this specter and hearing him sigh, I was moved to pity and broke silence.

"Do not sigh, sir," said I. "You will share my dinner. But it seems to me you have committed a serious blunder in coming here without any money."

"I have some, but it will not do to say so to these harpies."

"I admire the prudence which condemns you to bread and water! Do you know the cause of your imprisonment?"

"Yes, I know it full well, and will give you the history of it in a few words. My name is Squaldo Nobili. My father was a peasant, who had me taught to read and write, and who, at his death, left me his little house and the patch of land belonging to it. I am a native of Friuli, at a day's walk from Udine. A torrent called the Como often devastated my little estate, and this made me decide on selling it and coming to settle at Venice, which I did ten years since. I made by it eight thousand francs in handsome sequins, and knowing that in this happy Republic every one enjoyed all reasonable liberty, I persuaded myself that I could live at my ease by utilizing my little capital, and took to lending money on interest. Being sure of my thrift and of my judgment and knowledge of the world, I selected this business in preference to any other. I took a small house in the neighborhood of the Royal Canal; I furnished it, and, living alone and very quietly, in the course of two years I found myself possessed of ten thousand francs' profit on my

original capital, although, as I lived at my ease, I had laid out two thousand on my expenses. Going on in this way, I saw myself on the high road to securing a fine fortune in the course of time; but one day, having lent a Jew two sequins on a parcel of books, I found among them one entitled 'The Wisdom of Charon.'

"I then discovered how good a thing it is to be able to read; for this book—which you, sir, perhaps do not know—is of itself worth all others put together, since it contains all that man need know. It purges him of all the prejudices he may have contracted in childhood. With Charon, farewell to hell and all the vain terrors of a future life; my eyes were opened; I saw the path of happiness; I was wise. Procure that work, and laugh at the fools who will tell you it is a forbidden treasure."

By this queer discourse I knew my man. As to Charon's book, I had read it; but I did not know that it had been translated into Italian. Charon, a great admirer of Montaigne, had tried, but in vain, to outdo his model. He had classified a good many things from Montaigne, subjects which are to be found scattered at random in the works of that great philosopher; but Charon, as a priest and a theologian, deserved the condemnation he met with. And indeed he was never much read, in spite of a prohibition which ought to have made him the fashion. The Italian idiot who translated him did not even know that the Italian for Wisdom is Sapienza. Charon had the audacity to give his book the same title as Solomon's, which proved nothing in favor of his modesty.

My companion went on:

"Emancipated by Charon from the scruples which still haunted me, and the false ideas which it is so difficult to get rid of, I pushed my business so well that by the end of six years I had made no less than ten thousand sequins. You need not marvel at that, for in this wealthy city gambling, debauchery, and idleness upset everybody's finances, and there is a constant demand for money. Wise men profit by the dissipation of fools.

"About three years ago a certain Count Serimani came to request me to take five hundred sequins of his, to use

them in my business and to give him half the profits I might make on the sum. He asked for a simple receipt in full, by which I pledged myself to repay him the sum on demand. At the end of a year I handed him seventy-five sequins, being interest at the rate of fifteen per cent.; he gave me a receipt for it, but expressed himself dissatisfied. There he was wrong, for as I had plenty of money I had not actually lent his. The second year I did the same out of pure generosity; but we came to words, and he required the restitution of the five hundred sequins. 'By all means,' said I; 'but I shall take off the hundred and fifty sequins which you have had.'

"This put him in a rage, and he sent an officer of the law to demand the return of the whole. A clever lawyer undertook my defense, and gained me two years' delay. Three months ago a compromise was proposed and I refused; but fearing some violent measure, I applied to the Abbé Giustiniani, the man of business to the Marquis of Montallegre, the Spanish Ambassador, and for a small consideration he let me a small house on the privileged list where I was safe from surprises. I was quite ready to repay Count Serimani his money, but I claimed to retain a hundred sequins which his lawsuit had cost me.

"A week ago my solicitor and the Count's came to see me; I showed them two hundred and fifty sequins in a purse, and told them I was prepared to give them that sum but not a sou more. They went away, both looking but ill-pleased; but I cared little for that. Three days since the Abbé Giustiniani sent me word that the Ambassador had seen fit to allow the State Inquisitors to send their archers on a visit of perquisition to my rooms. I had thought such a thing impossible under the protection of a foreign ambassador, and instead of taking the usual precautions in such cases, I merely put my money into a place of safety, and calmly awaited the visitation. At daybreak, in fact, Messer Grande made his appearance, and asked me for three hundred and fifty sequins; and on my telling him I had nothing, he took me into custody, and here I am."

I shuddered, not so much at finding myself in the company of such a scoundrel, as at seeing that he regarded me

as his equal; for if he had had any better opinion of me, he certainly would not have favored me with this long-winded narrative, expecting me, no doubt, to applaud him. Through all the monstrous nonsense he talked during the three days he spent with me, everlastingly quoting Charon, I could verify the Italian saying: "*Guardati da colui che non ha letto che un libro solo.*"[1]

The perverted priest's book had made an atheist of him, and he boasted of the fact at every turn.

In the afternoon Lorenzo came to bid him go down with him to see the Secretary. He hastily dressed, but instead of his own shoes he slipped on mine without my observing it. He returned half an hour later, weeping, and took out of his own shoes two purses containing three hundred and fifty sequins, which, following the jailer, he carried down to the Secretary. A few minutes after he came back, fetched his cloak, and vanished. Lorenzo told me that he had been set at liberty. I supposed, and with reason, that to make him acknowledge the debt and pay it, he had been threatened with torture; and indeed, if it were used but for such ends, I, who loathe it in principle, and hate its inventor, would be the first to proclaim its utility.

One fine morning, when airing myself in the attic, my eyes fell on the bolt of which I have already spoken, and I saw that it might very well be made into a weapon offensive and defensive. I took possession of it, and having hidden it under my dressing-gown carried it into my cell. As soon as I was alone, I took the piece of black marble I have already mentioned, and soon discovered that it was an excellent hone stone, for after rubbing the bolt on it for some time I found I had a very good facet.

Greatly interested in this grand achievement and a kind of work quite new to me, by means of which I promised myself a tool such as was entirely prohibited in these lodgings; prompted perhaps by vanity at the idea of manufacturing a weapon without having any of the necessary implements, and even spurred by difficulties—for I had to rub the bolt almost in the dark and on the level of the grating, unable to fix the stone in any way but by holding it steady

[1] "Beware of him who has read but one book."

with my left hand, and without a drop of oil to moisten it and make the iron slip while I ground it to a point—still I decided on attempting this hard task. I moistened the stone with spittle instead of oil, and I toiled for eight days to produce eight facets of a pyramidal form, of which the point was perfect. The facets were an inch and a half long. My bolt thus ground down was an octangular stiletto, as well shaped as a regular cutler could have made it. The pain and fatigue I had to endure are inconceivable, and the patience needed for this disagreeable work, with no implement but an unfixed stone. It was a sort of torture of a kind unknown to the tyrants of any age. It gave me such a stiffness in the right arm that I could scarcely move it. The palm of my hand was macerated, as it were, and covered with a large wound, the result of the blisters produced by this long and arduous work. The pain I endured before it was finished can hardly be imagined.

Very proud of my achievement, though I had not yet thought of what use to make of the tool, my first care was to hide it so that it might escape even strict search. After thinking of a thousand ways, all open to objection, my eyes fell on my armchair, and I succeeded in concealing it there so as to excite no suspicion. Thus Providence aided me in preparing for an escape which was certainly marvelous if not miraculous. I confess I am proud of it; but my vanity is not of my success, for satisfaction had a large share in it—it is of the fact that I ever thought escape possible, and that I had the courage to attempt it in spite of all the adverse chances which, if they had thwarted my plans, would have made my situation infinitely worse, and have prevented my ever recovering my liberty.

After meditating for three or four days on the use to which I might put my iron tool, which was as thick as a walking stick and twenty inches long, I decided that the simplest scheme would be to make a hole in the floor under my bed.

I was perfectly convinced the room beneath mine was none other than that in which I had seen Signor Cavalli; I knew that this room was used every day, and had no doubt that when once I had made the hole, I could easily descend through it by letting myself down by my sheets knotted into

a rope and made fast to the foot of the bed. There I would hide under the large table at which the Council of three sat, and in the morning, as soon as the door should be opened, I would slip out and fly to a place of safety before I could be caught. I reflected that it was likely that an archer was left in the room on guard all night, but my crowbar would soon settle him. The floor, to be sure, might be double or even threefold; the great difficulty was to prevent the men on duty from sweeping the floor for the two months which my labors would occupy. By forbidding them to clean I might arouse suspicions, more particularly as I had hitherto insisted on their sweeping every day to rid me of the fleas; and the besom would have betrayed my operations.

I began by desiring them not to sweep, without assigning any reason. A week later Lorenzo asked the reason. I told him that the dust made me cough so violently that I feared some serious ill-effects.

"I will have the floor sprinkled with water, sir," said he.

"That would be worse, Signor Lorenzo," said I, "for the damp might produce a plethora."

This procured me a week's respite, but at the end of that time the brute insisted on the floor being swept. He had my bed lifted out into the attic, and under pretense of having the sweeping more effectually done, he lighted a candle. By this I knew that the rascal had his suspicions, but I very artfully made a show of perfect indifference, and far from giving up I was only the more determined.

Next morning I pricked my finger, smeared my handkerchief with blood and awaited Lorenzo in bed. As soon as he came I told him that I had been coughing so violently that I had broken some blood-vessel and had thrown up all this blood. He was to fetch me a doctor. The doctor came, bled me, and wrote me a prescription. I told him that Lorenzo had brought on the attack by insisting on sweeping. He blamed him severely, and, really just as if I prompted him, he gave the history of a young man who had lately died from that very cause, and added that nothing was more dangerous than inhaling dust. Lorenzo swore by all his gods that he had swept solely with a view to doing me a service, and promised that it should not occur again. I

laughed in my sleeve, for the doctor could not have done me a better turn if I had given him a hint. The archers in attendance were delighted, and promised themselves never again to sweep out the cells of any but the prisoners who enraged or ill-treated them.

When the doctor was gone, Lorenzo apologized, and assured me that all the other prisoners were quite well, though their rooms were swept with tolerable regularity. "But it is an important point," said he, "and I shall warn them, for I look upon them all as my children."

The long winter nights reduced me to despair; I had to spend nineteen mortal hours in darkness; and even during the foggy days which are not uncommon at Venice, the light which came in was insufficient to read by. Thus, not having anything from outside to distract my mind, I constantly reverted to the thought of my escape; a brain constantly occupied with but one idea may easily fall into monomania. The possession of the humblest kitchen lamp would have made me happy, but how could I procure such a luxury. Oh, noble prerogative of thought! How delighted I was when I fancied I had hit on a way of securing such a treasure! To make such a lamp I should require the different parts of which it consists—a vessel of some kind, wicks, oil, a flint and steel, tinder and matches. For a vessel a bowl might serve, and I had one in which eggs were cooked with butter. Under pretense that common oil disagreed with me, I had some Lucca oil procured for my salad; my cotton counterpane would supply me with wicks. Making believe to be suffering from toothache, I told Lorenzo that I wanted a piece of pumice stone; but as he did not know what that was, I told him that an ordinary gun flint would answer the same purpose after soaking for some hours in vinegar; that if then applied to the tooth it would assuage the pain. Lorenzo replied that the vinegar I had was very good, that I might put a flint into it myself, and he tossed me over two or three which he took out of his pocket, for a steel. All I now needed was some sulphur and tinder. A strong steel buckle which fastened my belt would serve and these two articles put my invention completely to rout. Fortune at last came to the rescue.

I had a sort of rash which, as it died away, left red patches on my arms, which sometimes itched. I desired Lorenzo to ask the doctor for a remedy, and next morning he brought up a note which the Secretary had read, in which the medical authority prescribed: "A day's fasting and four ounces of oil of almonds, and the rash will disappear; or else an ointment of flowers of sulphur. But this external remedy is somewhat dangerous."

"A fig for the danger," I said to Lorenzo. "Buy me some sulphur ointment, or else bring me some sulphur; I have some butter here and can mix it myself. Have you any sulphur matches? Give me a few."

He happened to have some in his pocket; and gave them to me.

How little is needed, when we are in distress, to afford joy and consolation! Still, in my case the matches were not a little thing; they were a precious treasure.

After this I spent several hours racking my brain to think of something to take the place of tinder—the only thing now lacking, and which I could invent no excuse for requiring—when I remembered that I had desired my tailor to put some German tinder into the armholes of my coat to save the material from being injured by perspiration. The coat, still quite new, was under my hand, and my heart beat high; but the tailor might not have put any in—I was torn between hope and fear. I had but a step to take to make sure; but that step was final—I dared not take it. At last I went to where my coat lay, and feeling myself almost unworthy of such a mercy, I fell on my knees and prayed to God fervently that the tailor might not have forgotten my orders. After this passionate prayer I took down the coat, unsewed the lining, and found the tinder! My joy was frenzy. It was natural that I should return thanks to God, since it was in full confidence in Him that I had had the courage to look for my tinder; and I did so with deep emotion.

At a later day, remembering this act of thanksgiving, I have always been glad that I acted on that impulse of a grateful heart; but I have laughed at myself on thinking of my folly in beseeching the Lord of All to make me find

the tinder. I should never have put up so absurd a petition before my imprisonment, nor should I do so now; the lack of freedom distorts the intellectual faculties. We ought to pray to God only to grant us spiritual grace, and not to upset the order of nature by miraculous intervention. If the tailor had omitted to put the tinder into the coat it is quite certain I should not have found it; and if he had, I might be sure that nothing could have caused its disappearance. What then did I look for from the Almighty? The spirit of my prayer may be thus put into words: O Lord, whether the tailor put tinder into the armholes or no, grant me to find it there.

Some theologians, no doubt, and many a good soul might regard this prayer as a pious one, for they would have regarded it as based in faith; and they would be right. But I myself regard it as vain, and even wrong; for, honestly speaking, to ask God for a thing out of the established order of nature is to hope to enlist Him on the side of our passions. But to thank God for that my tailor had not neglected my instructions, I hold to be in accordance with sound philosophy.

Having all the essentials, I soon contrived a lamp. The reader may imagine the satisfaction I felt at having created light, so to speak, in the depth of darkness, and that no smaller delight of having transgressed the orders of my atrocious oppressors! There was no more night for me, but also no more salad, for, though I was fond of salad, the need of treasuring the oil for the sake of light made me willingly forego it. I then fixed on the first Monday in Lent for beginning the difficult operation of breaking up the floor; for during the debaucheries of the carnival I feared that I might have visitors, and my foresight was justified.

On Shrove Sunday at noon, I heard the bolts drawn, and I saw Lorenzo followed by a big man whom I knew for the Jew Gabriel Schalon, well known for his skill in finding money for young men by leading them into bad speculations.

We were acquainted, so our compliments were seasonable. His company could not be a pleasure to me, but I was not

consulted. He desired Lorenzo to go to his house and fetch his dinner, as well as a bed and all he might need; but the jailer told him there would be time enough to talk of that on the morrow.

The Jew was a feather-brained fellow, a great gossip, and ignorant of everything but his business. He began by congratulating me on having been chosen rather than any one else for the advantage of his society. My only reply was to offer him half of my dinner, which he declined, saying he ate no unclean meat, and that he would wait to sup at home with the better appetite.

"When?" said I.

"This evening. You saw that when I asked for my bed he said we could talk of that to-morrow. It is quite clear that means that I shall not need it. Do you think it likely that they will leave a man of my consequence without food?"

"They did so to me."

"Possibly; but there is some difference between us. Besides, though it must go no further, the Inquisitors have blundered in having me arrested; and they are, I am certain, only puzzled as to how to repair their error."

"They will probably allow you a pension. A man of your importance must be pacified."

"You are very right. There is not on 'change an agent more useful to trade than I, and the five sages themselves have profited by the advice I have often given them. My detention is a singular incident which, by chance, is good luck to you."

"In what way, may I ask?"

"Within a month I will have you out. I know who to speak to and what to say."

"Then I count on you."

"You may."

This imbecile rascal really believed in his own importance. He was eager to tell me what was said of me in the city; but as he could only report the silly discourse of men of his own kidney, he bored me excessively, and, to hear no more, I took up a book. The idiot had the effrontery to desire me not to read, as his passion was for talking; but he talked of nothing but himself.

I congratulated myself on not having begun my great work before his arrival; all the more because he insisted on having the place swept. The first time he required it, the men on duty made me laugh by telling him that it would be my death. He finally insisted, and I was obliged to make believe to be ill; but my interest made it imperative that I should be accommodating.

On the Wednesday in Holy Week, Lorenzo informed us that the Secretary would come in the course of the afternoon to pay us the customary visit in honor of the Easter festival, with a view to easing the conscience of those who desire to receive the sacrament, as well as to inquire whether they have any complaints against the jailer. "So now, gentlemen," Lorenzo added, "if you have anything to say against me, say it. Dress in your best, for that is the etiquette." I then desired Lorenzo to send me a confessor on the morrow.

I dressed myself with care and the Jew did the same, taking leave of me beforehand, so sure did he feel that the Secretary would set him at liberty as soon as he had told his story. "My presentiment," said he, "is one of those which never have misled me."

"I congratulate you, but do not reckon without your host." He did not understand.

The Secretary came, and as soon as the door was opened the Jew rushed out and flung himself on his knees at his feet. For four or five minutes I heard nothing but his cries and sobs, for the Secretary spoke never a word. The Jew came in, and Lorenzo bid me step out. With a beard of eight months' growth, and a coat made to go courting in under an August sky, I must have cut a very funny figure in the cold. In fact, my teeth were chattering, which annoyed me very much, for I feared lest the Secretary should suppose I was shivering with fear. Being obliged to bend very low to get out of my cell, my bow was ready made, and drawing myself up I looked at him calmly, without affecting any inopportune pride, and awaited till he should address me. The Secretary also kept silence, so that we stood face to face like a couple of statues. At the end of two minutes, finding that I said nothing, the official slightly bowed and went away. I returned to my cell, and made haste

to undress and get into bed to warm myself. The Jew was amazed at my not having spoken, whereas my silence had been far more expressive than his cowardly clamor. A prisoner of my quality should never open his lips in the presence of his judge, excepting to reply when he is examined.

A fortnight after Easter, I was relieved of the presence of my troublesome Israelite, and the poor devil, instead of being sent home, was condemned to two years in the *Quattri.* When he was let out he went to settle at Trieste, where he ended his days.

As soon as I found myself alone again, I set to work vigorously. I had to make haste, for fear that some new and no less troublesome messmate should be brought in, and, like the Jew, might insist on the sweeping. I began by pulling out my bed, and after having lighted my lamp, I lay down on my face on the floor, my tool in my hand, with a cloth at hand to contain the scraps of wood as I worked it away. I had to destroy the wood by picking at it with my implement. At first I could only remove scraps as big as a grain of wheat, but before long the pieces were much larger.

The plank was of larch, sixteen inches across. I began picking at a spot where it lay next another plank, and as there were no nails nor rivets of any kind, my work was plain sailing. After digging at it for six hours, I tied up my towel to empty it on the morrow behind the litter of papers in the outer room. The fragments formed a mass four or five times larger than the hole from which I had removed them; the hollow was a curve of perhaps thirty degrees, and nearly ten inches in diameter. I replaced my bed, and next day emptied my cloth, taking care that the fragments were well out of sight.

Having got quite through the first plank on the first day —it was about two inches thick—I came upon another which I supposed to be like the first. Tormented by the fear of having other visitors, I redoubled my efforts, and by the end of three weeks had worked my way through three thicknesses of planks, of which the floor was composed; but then I thought all was lost, for I found that I had come upon a stratum of marble mosaic known at Venice by the name of *Terrazzo-Marmorin.* It is the usual flooring in all Venetian

houses excepting the poorest, for the highest Signors prefer the terrazzo to the finest wood flooring. I was dismayed to find that my bolt had no effect on this cement. Then I remembered that Hannibal—according to Livy—opened a passage through the Alps by breaking down the rocks with axes and other tools after softening them with vinegar. I for my part believed that Hannibal had achieved it, not by vinegar —*aceto*—but by *aceta*—the hatchets, for in the Latin of Padua *aceta* might very possibly stand for *ascia,* and who can be responsible for the errors of a copyist? I nevertheless proceeded to pour a bottle of strong vinegar, which I had by me, into the hole; and next day, whether it was the result of the vinegar, or whether, rested by the delay, I worked with greater energy and patience, I found I should ultimately triumph over this new difficulty, for there was no need to break the stones, only to pulverize the cement in which they were set with the point of my tool. And I soon perceived with great delight that the surface of it presented the only difficulty. In four days the mosaic floor was destroyed without the slightest injury to the point of my crowbar.

I fixed on St. Augustine's Eve as the day of my evasion, because I knew that the Grand Council met on that day, and that consequently there would be no one in the Bussola adjoining the room through which I must necessarily pass to escape. This would be on the 27th; but on the 25th at noon a misfortune befell me, at which I shudder now as I think of it, though so many years lie between that day and the present hour.

Exactly at noon I heard the noise of bolts, and I thought I was dying, for a violent throbbing in a spot three or four inches below my heart made me feel as though my last moment were come. Quite bewildered, I dropped into my chair and waited. Lorenzo, as soon as he got into the attic, put his head into the grating, exclaiming: "I congratulate you, sir, on the good news I have brought you." Thinking at first that it was a release—for I could think of nothing else—I shuddered; for I knew that if my excavation were discovered the boon would be revoked.

Lorenzo opened the door and bid me follow him.

"Wait till I am dressed."

"Never mind that. It is only that you are to be transferred from this cell to another, light and clean, and from whence out of two windows you can see half Venice. You will be able to stand upright——"

I could bear no more. I was fainting.

"Give me some vinegar," said I; "and go and tell his excellency the Secretary that I am grateful to the Tribunal for this favor, but that I implore them to leave me where I am."

"You make me laugh, sir; are you gone mad? You are to be released from this hell, and you refuse! Come, come; you must need obey. Get up; I will give you an arm, and have your clothes and books brought after you."

Seeing that resistance would be unavailing, I rose, and I was greatly relieved to hear him order one of the archers on duty to bring my armchair, for with it my crowbar would follow me, and with that, hope. I longed to be able to carry away my beautiful hole, the object of so much lost labor and wasted hopes. I may say that as I quitted this horrible place of torment I left my very soul behind me.

Leaning on Lorenzo's elbow—he trying to cheer me by silly jests—I went along the narrow passages and down three steps into a well-lighted room; at the furthest left-hand corner he showed me through a little door into another corridor, about two feet wide and twelve long, and in the furthest corner was my new prison. It had a barred window within two other windows, also barred, which lighted the passage, and through it there was a beautiful view away to the Lido. But I was not inclined at that moment to rejoice in it. However, I discovered presently that when this window was opened it admitted a soft, fresh breeze, which mitigated the intolerable heat, and was a real balm to the poor wretch condemned to live there, especially in the hot season. As the reader may suppose, it was not till later that I made these observations. As soon as I entered my new cell, Lorenzo placed my chair and went away, saying that he would fetch the rest of my effects.

The stoicism of Zeno and the *ataraxia* of the Pyrrhonians offer a singular picture to the mind. They are lauded and

laughed at, admired and satirized, and wise men admit them as possible only with qualifications. I, for my part, think that no man has any right to judge of moral possibilities or impossibilities, excepting so far as concerns himself; for no honest man can grant the existence of an interior force of which he does not himself feel the germs. What I myself feel on this point is, that by acquired strength and long training a man may learn not to cry out under acute suffering, and to remain steadfast under the shock of a first impulse. But that is all. *Abstine et sustine* are the note of a sound philosophy; but the physical pain endured by a stoic is not in itself less than that which the epicurean suffers; and grief is more cruel to the man who conceals it than to him who finds real relief in lamentation. The man who insists on seeming indifferent to an event which seals his doom, only seems so—unless he is an idiot or a lunatic; and the man who boasts of perfect equanimity is a liar—*pace* Socrates. But I can believe Zeno when he tells me that he had found the secret of keeping himself from turning pale or red, from laughing or crying.

I sat in my armchair as motionless as a statue, awaiting the storm, but not dreading it. What utterly overwhelmed me was the intolerable thought of all the trouble I had taken, all the plots I had laid, coming to nothing. Still I felt only regret, and no repentance; and I did my utmost to avoid thinking of the future, as the only consolation I could find.

Lifting up my soul to God, I could not help thinking of this fresh disaster as a punishment sent by God Himself for not having made haste to escape as soon as I had everything ready for flight. Still, though I had to confess that I might have got away three days sooner, I could not but think the punishment too heavy; all the more so since I had delayed from motives of prudence, for that seemed to me worthy of reward. If I had yielded at once to my impatience I could have braved a thousand perils. Nothing short of a revelation could abrogate my reasons for fixing the 27th of August for my attempt, and the study of Maria d'Agrada had not made me mad enough for that.

CHAPTER IV

I WAS in this state of curiosity and despair when two men brought in my bed. They immediately went out again to fetch the rest of my things, and for more than two hours I saw no one, though the door of my cell remained open. This delay was not natural, suggesting a thousand ideas; but I could not fix my mind on anything. I only knew that I had everything to fear, and this assurance led me to make every effort to bring my mind to such a state of tranquillity as should enable me to bear up against all the misfortunes which threatened me.

Besides the *Piombi* and the *Quattri,* the State Inquisitors had nineteen other hideous dungeons under ground, in the Ducal Palace, horrible dens intended for the poor wretches who are not to be put to death, though by their crimes they are worthy of it.

All the ruling judges of the world have thought that they were granting certain criminals a great boon by allowing them to live when they had deserved to die; but often the momentary pang is exchanged for a most horrible existence, to such a degree that these torments incessantly renewed are worse than death. In considering such cases from a religious and philosophical point of view, such a commutation of a capital sentence can be regarded as merciful only so far as the victim thinks it so; but the criminal is rarely consulted, and then the so-called reprieve is in fact injustice.

These subterranean prisons are for all the world like tombs, but they are known as the *Pozzi,* because there is always two feet of water in them, which comes in from the sea by the opening which admits a little light; this grated window is but one foot square. Unless the poor wretch condemned to live in these sewers wishes to take a salt-water bath, he is compelled to squat all day on a platform where a straw mattress forms his bed, and which serves him too as a larder. Every morning he has a jug of water given him, a bowl of thin soup, and a piece of coarse bread, which he must eat at once if he does not wish to see it devoured by the huge water-rats which swarm in these dreadful dens.

The creatures cast into the *Pozzi* are commonly doomed to end their days there, and sometimes live to be very old. A wretch who died there at the time when I was under the leads, had spent seven and thirty years there, and he was forty-four years old when first confined there. Knowing that he had fully merited death, the commutation may to him have seemed an act of mercy, for these are the beings who fear nothing but death. His name was Béquelin. French by birth, he had served, with the rank of captain, in the Republican army during the last war against the Turks in 1716. He was subaltern to Marshal Count Schulemburg, who compelled the Grand Vizier to raise the siege of Corfu. This Béquelin was the Marshal's spy; he used to disguise himself as a Turk and go into the Mussulman camp; but at the same time, he also did spy for the Grand Vizier, and having been proved guilty of this double service, he certainly was not hardly used in being condemned to end his days in the *Pozzi.* He only could be dull and hungry; but with so infamous a character, he perhaps said to himself many a time, *Dum vita super est bene est.*[1]

At Spielberg, in Moravia, I saw far worse dungeons indeed; the clemency of the State placed those condemned to death there, and none ever survived for more than a year. What clemency!

During these two hours of mortal suspense, a prey to the gloomiest thoughts and to every disastrous fancy, I could not help expecting to find myself cast into one of these horrible pits—awful holes where the victim either feasts on chimerical hopes or is a prey to unreasonable terrors. The Tribunal, disposing of every part of the palace, might only too probably condemn to hell a man who had attempted to escape from purgatory.

At last I heard heavy steps, and presently Lorenzo appeared before me, his face distorted with fury, foaming with rage, and blaspheming God and all the saints. He began by ordering me to deliver up to him the ax and all the tools I had used for working through the floor, and to tell him the name of the man who had furnished me with them. I replied, without stirring and with perfect coolness, that

[1] "So long as life remains to us all is well."

I did not know what he was talking about. At this he commanded that I should be searched; but rising with a bold face I defied these scoundrels, and taking off all my clothes: "Do your duty," said I; "but do not lay a single finger on me."

They examined my mattresses, emptied out the straw mattress and shook the cushions of my armchair; nothing was to be found.

"You do not choose to tell me where the instruments are with which you made the hole. Well, means can be found to make you speak."

"If indeed I have made a hole anywhere, I shall say that it was you who supplied me with the means of doing so, and that I have returned everything to you."

At this threat, which made his followers grin with satisfaction—he had probably annoyed them by some insult—he stamped his feet, tore his hair, and rushed out like a madman.

When he gave me my account I only glanced at the total, and told him to give the difference to his wife, excepting a sequin which I bid him divide between the men who did his dirty work. This little act of liberality quite won the poor fellows, who thanked me eagerly.

Lorenzo lingered behind them on purpose, and thus addressed me:

"You said, sir, that it was from me that you had the necessary tools for making that enormous hole, so I have no more curiosity on that point; but will you be good enough to tell me who procured you the necessary materials for making a lamp?"

"You did."

"Oh, really that is too much for me. I did not think that a ready wit meant such audacity."

"I am telling you the truth. You, with your own hands, gave me everything needful—the oil, flint, and matches. The rest I had."

"There you are right, but can you prove to me with equal ease that I supplied you with tools for making the hole?"

"Undoubtedly, for I have had nothing from any one but you."

"Mercy, what are you saying? Tell me how I supplied you with an ax."

"I will tell you the whole truth and nothing but the truth; but only in the presence of the Secretary."

"I want to know no more; I will take your word for it. Remember I am a poor man with a family of children!" And he went away, clasping his head in his hands.

I congratulated myself heartily on having found means to make this blusterer fear me; it was evidently fated that I should be the death of him. I perceived that his own interest would forbid his giving his employers any information as to what had occurred.

I had desired Lorenzo to buy for me a copy of the works of Maffei; he was vexed at the outlay, but did not dare tell me so. He asked me what I could want with more books as I already had plenty.

"I have read them all," said I; "I want some new ones."

"I will get some one who is here to lend you some, if you will lend him yours. In that way you will save your money."

"They will probably be romances, and for them I do not care."

"They are scientific books; if you fancy yours is the only wise head shut up here, you are mistaken."

"I have no objection; we shall see. Here is a book I will lend to your wise-head; bring me one in change."

I had given him Petau's *Rationarium;* in four minutes he came back with the first volume of Wolff. Not ill-pleased, I told him I would do without Maffei, and at this he was highly delighted.

I was less enchanted by the prospect of reading this learned work, than by the opportunity of opening communications with some one who might collaborate in my scheme for escaping—a scheme I had already sketched in my brain—but I opened the book as soon as Lorenzo had left me, and my joy was great at finding a paraphrase of this motto from Seneca in six well-turned lines: *Calamitosus est animus futuri anxius.*[2] I at once composed six others, and this was the expedient I contrived for writing them. I had let the nail of

[2] "Wretched is the man who is anxious about the future."

my little finger grow long, to clean my ears; it was very long; I cut it to a point and used it as a pen. I had no ink. I thought of pricking myself to write with my blood, when it struck me that the juice of mulberries would serve me for ink, and I had some. Besides the lines, I wrote a list of the books I had got, and placed it inside the back of the book. You must know that in Italy books are commonly bound in parchment, and in such a way that when the book is opened the back forms a sort of pocket. On the title I wrote *latet* (hidden). I was impatient to have an answer, so the moment Lorenzo came in next morning, I told him I had read the book and begged that the owner would send me another. I had the second volume a minute after.

No sooner was I alone than I opened the book and found a loose leaf, with words to this effect written on it in Latin: "We are two in this prison, and we are delighted to find that the ignorance of our avaricious jailer procures us a privilege which is unexampled in this place. I who write am Marino Balbi, a noble Venetian and a friar of Somasco, and my companion is Count Andrea Asquino, of Udine, the chief town of Friuli. He bids me tell you that all the books he has of which you find the list in the back of this volume, are at your service; but I must warn you, Signore, that we must take the greatest precautions to conceal our communications from Lorenzo."

In the position in which we found ourselves, it was not strange that we should both have had the same idea—that of sending the list of our scanty library, and of slipping it into the back of a book; this was an act of simple good sense; but I thought it strange that the counsel of caution should be written on a loose leaf. It seemed unlikely that Lorenzo should not open the book, and, as he could not read he would have put it in his pocket to get some one to tell him the contents; everything would be discovered at the very beginning. This led me to conclude that my correspondent was somewhat heedless.

After reading a list of books, I wrote down who I was, how I had been arrested, my ignorance of the crime for which I was imprisoned, and the hopes I had of finding my way out. Balbi responded in a letter of sixteen pages. Count

Asquino did not write; the monk gave me the history of all his own misfortunes. He had been a prisoner four years for having broken his vows; the first time he had been admonished, the second time he had been threatened; the third time he had been put in prison. The Superior of his convent, however, sent him his dinner every day. This letter in all its details betrayed the writer; I knew the man. He was eccentric, illogical, spiteful, silly and ungrateful; I could detect all this in his letter; for, after saying how wretched he should be but for the society of Count Asquino, who was seventy years of age, he filled two pages with abuse of him, describing his faults and absurdities. In the world I should have taken no notice of such a man; but under the leads I was forced to make the most of every chance. I found a pencil, pen, and some paper slipped into the back of the binding, and this enabled me to write at my ease.

My suspicions being by this time quite removed, I argued as follows:

I must be free at whatever cost. The tool I have is capital but I cannot possibly make any use of it, for my room is sounded all over every morning by tapping with an iron bar, excepting on the ceiling. Hence, if I am to hope to get out, it must be through the ceiling, but to achieve this I must make a hole, and I cannot do that from below, for it is not a matter of a day's work. I must have an accomplice, and he may escape with me. I had no choice, so I could not employ any one but the friar. He was eight-and-thirty, and though not overburdened with good sense, I fancied that the love of liberty, man's first instinct, would give him enough determination to enable him to carry out my instructions. To begin with, I must make up my mind to tell him everything, and then devise some means of sending him my tool. These were two difficult matters.

I began by asking him whether he pined for liberty, and if he were prepared to run all risks to secure it with me. He replied that there was nothing which he and his comrade would not do to be quit of their bonds; but, he added, it was useless to rack our brains over schemes which could not be carried into execution. He filled four long pages with the impossibilities which presented themselves to his

inaptitude, for the poor wretch saw no plan of any kind which offered the remotest hope of success. I answered that general difficulties did not daunt me; that, in making my plans, only difficulties of detail had engaged my attention; that these could certainly be conquered; and I ended by giving him my word of honor that he should be free if he would pledge himself to follow my instructions to the letter.

This he promised.

I informed him that I had a little crowbar, twenty inches in length; that with this tool he was to pierce a hole through the ceiling of his room, that then he was to pierce the floor over my head; thus he would be able to get at me, and then, after breaking through the ceiling, he was to help me to get out. "When that is done, your work will be done and mine will begin. I will set you free, you and Count Asquino."

He answered that even if he got me out of my cell I should still be in prison, and that our situation there would differ from our situation now only so far as space was concerned, since we should simply find ourselves in the lofts, which were shut in by three strong doors.

"I know that, reverend sir," said I, "but we will not get out by the doors. My plan is laid, and I am sure of succeeding. All I ask of you is to be exact in following my instructions, and to abstain from making objections. All you have to think of is how I may best transmit to you the instrument of our safety, without giving the bearer of it the faintest suspicion. Meanwhile, get your jailer to bring you a couple of score of pictures of the saints, large enough to cover the walls and ceiling of your room. These pious images will rouse no suspicions in Lorenzo, and will avail to hide the gap you must make in the ceiling. It will take you some days to work the opening, and Lorenzo will not see what you have done each morning if you cover it up with a picture. If you ask me why I do not do this myself, I reply that I cannot, because I am an object of suspicion to our warder, and you will no doubt think this a valid objection."

Although I had desired him to think of a plan for obtaining the tool, I was constantly trying to think of one myself; I had a happy inspiration, on which I acted forthwith. I

desired Lorenzo to buy me a folio edition of the Bible which had been lately published; the Vulgate and the Septuagint together. I hoped to be able to slip my tool into the back of this volume and so send it to the monk; when I had it, I found that the bolt was two inches longer than the book.

However, some decision must be taken, so I determined to send the bolt under cover of the Bible by finding some accessory means of preventing the bearer from discovering the ends sticking out at each end of the enormous volume. This is what I contrived.

I told Lorenzo that I meant to keep Saint Michael's day by having a dish of macaroni with cheese, and that as I wished to do a little civility to the gentleman who had been so kind as to lend me the books, I wanted to send him a large dish of it, and to prepare it with my own hands. Lorenzo told me that the said gentleman was very curious to see the big book which had cost three sequins. This made matters easy. "Very good," said I, "I will send it him with the macaroni; only, bring me the largest dish you have in the place, for I want to do things on a grand scale."

He promised to satisfy me. I wrapped my crowbar in paper and slipped it into the back of the Bible, taking note that it stuck out no more at one end than at the other. By placing a large dish of macaroni very full of melted butter on the book, I was sure that his eyes must be fixed on the rim of the dish to avoid spilling the grease on the book. I warned Father Balbi of all this, bidding him be careful how he took the dish, and above all to take both book and dish together, and not one before the other.

On the day appointed Lorenzo came earlier than usual, with a saucepan full of boiling macaroni, and all the necessary ingredients for seasoning it. I melted a quantity of butter, and after putting the macaroni into the dish I poured butter on it till it reached the very edge. The dish was a huge one, much larger than the book on which I had placed it. All this I did at the door of my cell, Lorenzo standing outside.

When everything was ready I carefully lifted the Bible with the dish, taking care to turn the back of the volume to the bearer; and I bid Lorenzo hold his arms well apart

and spread his hands, to take great care not to spill the grease on the book, and to carry it straight to its destination. As I gave him the precious burden I looked him in the face, and was delighted to see that he never took his eyes off the butter for fear of spilling it. He said he had better take the dish first and come back for the book; but I said it would spoil all the value of the gift, and that it must all go together. Then he complained that I had put too much butter in, and said with a laugh that if he spilt it he would not be responsible for the damage.

As soon as I saw the Bible safe in the lout's hands I felt certain of success, for he could not see the ends of the bolt without lurching very much to one side, and I saw nothing to induce him to take his eyes off the dish which he had to keep level. I watched him till he went into the outer cell, leading to the monk's, and I heard Balbi blow his nose three times, the signal we had agreed on to show that everything had arrived safely. And in a minute Lorenzo returned to tell me so.

Balbi set to work forthwith, and by the end of a week he had made a large enough hole in the ceiling, which he covered with a print stuck fast with bread-crumb. On the 8th of October he wrote that he had spent the whole night working at the wall which divided us, and that he had not been able to move a single brick. He expatiated on the difficulty of loosening the bricks, which were set in a very hard cement; but he promised to persevere, though he persisted in saying that we should only get ourselves into a worse plight than ever. I replied that I was sure of the contrary, and that he must take my word for it and work on.

Alas! I was not sure of anything of the kind, but I had to say so or give the whole thing up. I must get out of this hell where I was kept by the most detestable tyranny; this was all I knew; and all I thought of was to take steps to that end, determined either to succeed or never to give in till I had reached the point where I could go no further. I had studied and learnt from the great book of experience that it is vain to take advice in great undertakings; that the only way is to put them into execution, and not to dispute with fortune for her share in the ruling of human

concerns. If I had communicated to Father Balbi any such high mysteries of philosophy, he would have said that I was a madman.

His difficulties were over after the first night, for the further he worked the easier it became, and at last he had dislodged thirty-six bricks.

On the 16th of October, at ten in the morning, at the very moment when I was engaged in translating an ode of Horace, I heard above my head a stamping noise and three little taps. This was the signal we had agreed on to make sure that we were not mistaken. He worked on till nightfall, and next day he wrote that if my ceiling were not more than two planks thick his work would be finished that day. He told me that he had taken care to make the excavation round, as I had advised him, and that he would not pierce the boards. This, above all, was needful, for the smallest symptom of a crack would have been fatal. The hole, he added, would be such that it would not take more than a quarter of an hour to finish it. I had fixed the hour for the next day but one, to escape from my dungeon at night, never to return; for, with a companion, I felt sure of being able to make a hole in the roof of the Ducal palace in the course of three or four hours; through this I meant to get outside, and then take any means that might offer to descend to the earth.

I was not at this point yet, however, for my ill-luck had more than one difficulty in store for me.

That very day—it was a Monday—at two in the afternoon, I heard the door of the hall open close to my cell. My blood ran cold, but I had enough presence of mind to knock twice —the signal on which we had agreed—to warn Balbi to withdraw quickly into his cell and set everything in order. A minute later Lorenzo entered my cell, apologizing for giving me the company of a great rascal. This was a man of between forty and fifty, stunted, lean, ugly, ill-dressed, with a black crop wig. Two archers unfastened his cords while I stood looking at him. That he was a rascal I could not doubt, since Lorenzo announced him as such without his words making the slightest perceptible impression on him.

"The Tribunal," said I, "is master here."

Lorenzo, having had a straw mattress brought in for him,

told him that he would be allowed ten sous a day, and then locked us in together.

Heart-broken at this fatal incident, I looked at the creature, whose stupid face betrayed him a rogue. I thought I would get him to talk, when he began of his own accord, thanking me for having procured him a straw bed. Wishing to win his good graces, I told him he might share my food; he kissed my hand, and asked me whether he might have the ten sous the Tribunal allowed him all the same. I told him he might. At these words he fell on his knees, and pulling an enormous rosary out of his pocket he looked about him, peering into every corner.

"What are you looking for?"

"I ask your pardon, signore, but I am seeking some picture of the Holy Virgin, for I am a Christian, and if there were but the poorest little crucifix—for I have never so sorely needed to commend myself to Saint Francis of Assissi, whose name I unworthily bear."

I could scarcely help laughing, not on account of his Christian piety, for conscience and faith are matters which no one has a right to interfere with, but by reason of the form of his remonstrance. I supposed he took me for a Jew, so to undeceive him, I hastened to hand him the Offices of the Virgin. He kissed the print, then returned me the book saying that his father, a warder of galley-slaves, had unfortunately neglected having him taught to read. "I am," said he, "a devotee of the Holy Rosary," and he went on to tell me of a number of miracles, to which I listened with the patience of an angel. He begged me to allow him the picture of the Virgin to look at while he told his beads.

Soradaci convinced me that he would certainly be examined, for it was evident that the Secretary had imprisoned him on a mere suspicion of calumny. On this I determined to entrust to him two letters which, if they reached their destination could do me neither good nor harm, but which would certainly be interpreted in my favor if the traitor should hand them over to the Secretary, as I made no doubt he would. I took two hours writing these letters with a pencil.

The next day Lorenzo brought me the crucifix, the two prints, and the holy water, and after having fed my rascal I

told him that I expected him to do me a service on which my happiness depended. "I rely," said I, "on your friendship and courage. Here are two letters which I beg you will deliver to their address as soon as you are set free. My happiness depends on your fidelity. But you must hide these letters, for if they were found on you on leaving this place we should both of us be ruined. You must swear on the crucifix and on the images that you will not betray me."

"I am ready, my dear master," said he, "to swear anything you choose. I owe you too much ever to betray you."

And thereupon many tears, lamentations, and woe. He was miserable, he said, at being suspected of treason to one for whom he would have given his life. I knew what all this was worth, but I played the farce out. After dressing him up in a shirt and cap, I stood bareheaded, and having sprinkled the cell with holy water and watered him profusely with it, I made him repeat a tremendous oath under a farrago of imprecations devoid of sense, and which for that reason were better fitted to impress terror on his soul. When he had pledged himself by this burlesque ceremony to deliver the letters safely, I placed them in his hands. He insisted on stitching them into the back of his waistcoat, between the stuff and the lining, and I let him do it.

I was morally certain that he would give them up to the Secretary on the first opportunity, so I had exerted all my art that the style might not betray me; they could only command the esteem of the Tribunal, and perhaps procure me some indulgence. One was addressed to Bragadino and the other to the Abbé Grimani. I begged them not to be uneasy about me, for that I had every hope of soon being set at liberty, and that they would find on my release that my punishment had done me more good than harm, since there was not a man in Venice who needed reforming more than I. I begged M. de Bragadino to send me a pair of fur boots for the winter, my cell being lofty enough for me to stand upright and walk about.

I took good care not to let Soradaci suppose that these missives were so innocent, for he might have taken it into his head to be honest, and deliver them safely; and this was not what I wanted. You will find, beloved reader, in the next

chapter what power oaths had to bind the miscreant soul of the dreadful companion who had been forced upon me.

CHAPTER V

SORADACI had had my letters some two or three days when, one afternoon, Lorenzo came to fetch him to see the Secretary. As he was absent several hours I was beginning to hope that I might never see him again; but to my great surprise, in the evening he was brought back again.

On the morrow, to assure myself that I had not been deceived in my suspicions, I desired the spy to return me the letter I had written to M. de Bragadino, that I might add something to it. "You can sew it in again afterwards," said I.

"It is not safe," said he. "The jailer might come meantime, and we should be done for."

"Never mind that," replied I; "give me the letter."

Then the wretch fell at my feet, and declared that the second time he was led before the terrible Secretary he had been taken with a fearful trembling, and that he had felt so intolerable a weight on his back, exactly where the letters lay, that the Secretary had asked him what was the matter, and he had no power to conceal the truth. The Secretary having then rung, Lorenzo came in. He unbound him, took off his waistcoat, and unsewed the lining; and the Secretary, after reading the letters, put them into a drawer of his desk. "And the Secretary told me," the wretch added, "that if I had delivered the letters it would certainly have been known, and have cost me my life."

I made believe to turn faint; I hid my face in my hands and fell on my knees by the bed, close to the print of the Virgin, whom I solemnly besought to take vengeance on the base villain who had betrayed me and broken such terrible oaths. Then I lay down on my bed with my face to the wall, and I had sufficient tenacity to remain in that attitude all day, without stirring a finger or speaking a single word; pretending not to hear the cries, and groans, and protestations of repentance of that infamous traitor. I played my part to perfection in a comedy which I had planned in my head. During the night, I wrote to Balbi to come at exactly nineteen o'clock,[1]

[1] About noon towards the end of the month of October.

not a minute before or after, to go on with his work, and to work exactly four hours, not a minute longer. Our release, said I, depends on your punctuality, and you have nothing to fear.

It was now the 25th of October, and the time was at hand when I must carry out my project or abandon it without hope. The State Inquisitors and the Secretary went every year to spend the first three days of November at some village on the *terra firma*. Lorenzo, taking advantage of the absence of his masters, never failed to get drunk every evening, and sleeping longer in the morning, did not make his rounds till a good deal later. Knowing this, prudence required that I should choose that time for my flight, being sure that it would not be discovered till late in the day. But there was another reason for the haste which made me decide on this course, at a time when I could no longer doubt the villainy of my base companion, which is of sufficient importance to be communicated to my readers.

The greatest comfort to a man in suffering is the hope of a speedy release. He sighs for the moment when he shall see the end of his woes; he fancies that his wishes can hasten it on, and would do anything on earth to know what hour is fixed for the cessation of his misery; but no one can tell at what moment an event will happen which depends on the determination of another unless that person has announced it. But the sufferer, who is weak and impatient, is, as it were unconsciously, predisposed to be superstitious. "God," says he, "must know the very moment when my pain will cease; and God may permit that it should be revealed to me, never mind how." When he has once fallen into this train of argument, he no longer hesitates to try his fortune by any means his fancy may dictate, if he is more or less inclined to believe in the revelations of the oracle he happens to select. This frame of mind is not conspicuously unlike that of the greater number of those who were wont to consult the Pythia, or the oaks of Dodona, or of those who, even in our own day, study the Cabbala, or seek the revelation they hope for in a verse of the Bible or a line of Virgil—this indeed has made the *Sortes Virgilianæ* famous, of which many writers tell us; or, finally, of those who are firmly convinced that their diffi-

culties will all be solved by the fortuitous or premeditated arrangement of a mere pack of cards.

I was in this state of mind. But not knowing what means to employ to compel Fate to reveal through the Bible the end in store for me—that is to say, the hour at which I should recover the incomparable blessing of liberty—I resolved to consult the divine poem of Messer Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso,* which I knew by heart, and in which I delighted up in my cell. I worshiped the genius of that great poet, and thought him far better fitted than Virgil to tell me my fortune. With this idea I wrote down a question addressed to the imaginary Intelligence, asking in which canto of Ariosto's poem I should find the day of my deliverance prophesied. Afterwards I composed an inverted pyramid of the numbers derived from the words in the question, and by subtracting nine from each pair of figures I had nine for a remainder. I concluded that the prophecy I sought must be in the ninth canto. I pursued the same method to arrive at the line and stanza containing the oracle, and I found *seven* as the number of the stanza, and *one* for the line.

I took up the poem, my heart beating as though I really had the most entire confidence in this oracle. I opened it, turned over the leaves, and read these words:

Fra il fin d'Ottobre e il capo di Novembre.[2]

The perfect appropriateness of the line struck me as so remarkable that, though I cannot say that I altogether believed in the oracle, the reader will forgive me if I confess that I did my utmost to verify it. The curious part of the matter is that between the last of October and the beginning of November there is but the one instant of midnight; and it was exactly as the clock struck midnight on the 31st of October that I quitted my prison, as the reader will presently learn.

At the same time I would beg him, in spite of these facts, not to think of me as more superstitious than other men, for it would be a mistake. I tell the tale because it is true, because it is extraordinary, and because, if I had not trusted to it I might perhaps never have escaped. It may serve to teach those who are not too learned, that but for prophecies many

[2] "Between the end of October and the beginning of November."

things which have happened might never have occurred. The event serves the prophecy by verifying it. If the event does not happen, the prophecy is void; but I may refer the amiable reader to history, where he will find several events which never would have happened if they had not been foretold. I must now beg to be forgiven for this digression.

This was how I spent the morning till noon, to impress the mind of this vile and idiotic creature, to confuse his feeble brain and stultify him with terrible fancies, so as to render him incapable of doing me any injury. As soon as Lorenzo left us, I told Soradaci to come and eat his soup. The wretch was in bed, and had told Lorenzo that he was ill. He would not have dared approach me if I had not called him. He got up, and, throwing himself flat on his face at my feet, he kissed them and told me, weeping bitterly, that unless I forgave him he was a dead man in the course of the day, for that he already felt the Virgin's curse and vengeance which I had invoked on him. He felt devouring pains in his stomach, and his mouth was full of ulcers. In fact he opened it, and I saw that it was full of sores; but whether he had them the day before I know not. I did not take any pains to ascertain whether he was telling me the truth; it was to my interest to seem to believe him, and let him hope for mercy. First of all, I must get him to eat and drink. The wretch intended, perhaps, to deceive me; but as I was firmly resolved to deceive him, the point was to see which was the cleverer of the two. I had prepared a plan of attack which he would find it hard to evade.

So I put on an inspired look, and I said, "Sit down and eat this soup, and I will tell you of the good fortune that awaits you. The Virgin of the Rosary appeared to me this morning at daybreak, and bid me forgive you. You will not die; you will leave this place with me." Quite dazed, and on his knees for lack of a chair, he ate his soup as I did mine; then he sat down on his mattress to listen to me, and I spoke to this effect:

"The grief I experienced in consequence of your atrocious treachery kept me awake all night, for those letters will condemn me to end my days here. My sole consolation, I own, was the certainty of seeing you die before my eyes in less

than three days. My head full of this notion—though unworthy of a Christian, since God bids us forgive—I at last dozed in sheer weariness, and during that blissful sleep I had a vision. I saw the Blessed Virgin, whose image you there behold, living before my eyes, and she spoke to me in these words: 'Soradaci is a devotee of my Sacred Rosary and under my protection. I desire you will forgive him; then the curse now laid on him will cease to act. As the reward of your generosity, I will send one of my angels in human form to descend from heaven and open the roof of your prison and take you out in five or six days. The angel will begin his labors to-day exactly at noon, and cease at half an hour before sunset, for he must return to heaven by daylight. When you go, following the angel, take Soradaci with you, and provide for him, on condition of his giving up the business of a spy. Tell him all this.' With these words she vanished and I awoke."

Preserving perfect gravity and my prophetic tone, I kept an eye on the traitor's face; he seemed quite petrified. I then took my Book of Hours, I sprinkled the cell with holy water, and began to pretend to be praying, kissing the image of the Virgin from time to time. An hour later, this creature, who till now had not opened his lips, asked me point blank at what hour the angel would come down from heaven, and whether we should hear the noise he must make to open the cell. I replied that I was certain that he would come at noon precisely, and that we should hear him at work, and that he would stop at the hour specified by the Virgin.

"You may have been dreaming," said he.

"I am sure I was not. Do you feel capable of vowing to renounce the business of a spy?"

But instead of answering me he fell asleep, and only awoke two hours later to ask whether he might put off taking the pledge I required of him.

"You may put it off," said I, "until the angel comes in to release me; but if you then do not swear to renounce the atrocious trade which has brought you to this pass, and which will certainly bring you to the gallows, I shall leave you here; for so the Virgin has commanded, and she will deprive you of her protection."

As I watched him, I read on his ugly face the satisfaction he felt, for he firmly believed that the angel would never come. He looked as though he pitied me. I only longed for the clock to strike; the whole farce amused me hugely, for I was sure that the arrival of the angel would utterly bewilder his miserable intellect. I knew that there could be no failure unless Lorenzo had forgotten to deliver the book, which was hardly possible.

An hour before noon I insisted on dining; I drank nothing but water, and Soradaci drank all the wine, and he afterwards ate all the garlic I had, which added to his excitability. The instant I heard the first stroke of nineteen, I fell on my knees, desiring him, in a voice of thunder, to do the same. He obeyed, looking at me wildly. When I heard the little noise of the priest behind the wall, "The angel is there!" cried I, lying down flat on my face, and giving him a vigorous punch to make him take the same attitude. The noise of scraping was loud, and for a quarter of an hour I had the patience to remain in my uncomfortable position. Under any other circumstances I should have laughed to see the creature lie like a log; but I did not laugh, for I did not forget my laudable purpose of driving the animal mad, or at least reducing him to helplessness. His perverted soul could only be recalled to decent humanity by abject terror. As soon as I rose I knelt down, allowing him to do the same, and for three hours and a half I kept him at his beads. He fell asleep now and then, fatigued by his position rather than by the monotony of his occupation; but he never once interrupted me. Now and then he raised a furtive eye to the ceiling, and with stupidity stamped on every feature he bowed and nodded to the image of the Virgin, and all in a way too comical for words. When the clock struck half-past twenty-three, "Fall on your face," said I, in a tone of solemn devotion; "the angel is departing."

Balbi went down into his cell again, and we heard no more.

On rising, I looked at the wretch's face, which was stamped with bewilderment and terror. I was delighted; I amused myself with talking to him for a few minutes to see what he would say. He wept copiously, and could talk only the most extravagant nonsense, his ideas having no sequence whatever. He spoke of his sins, of his private acts of devotion, of his

zeal for St. Mark, of his duties to the Republic—and to these various merits he ascribed the mercy of which he was the object on the part of the Virgin Mary. I was compelled to listen with an air of compunction to a long story of the miracles of the Rosary which he had heard from his wife, whose confessor was a young Dominican. He said he could not imagine what I could do with such an ignorant fellow as he.

"You will be my servant, and have everything you can need without being obliged to follow the dangerous business of a spy."

"But we cannot remain in Venice?"

"Certainly not. The angel will guide us to some place which does not belong to Saint Mark. Are you ready now to pledge yourself to give up your old employment? And, if you swear it, will you perjure yourself a second time?"

"If I swear it I will keep my oath, that you may be very sure. At the same time, but for my perjury, you must allow you would never have obtained the special favor of the Blessed Virgin. My breach of faith has proved the origin of your good fortune; you ought to befriend me, therefore, and rejoice in my betrayal."

"Do you love Judas who betrayed Jesus Christ?"

"No."

"You see, then, we detest the traitor, even while we adore the Providence which brings good out of evil. Hitherto you have been simply a scoundrel; you have sinned against God and the Virgin, and I will not accept your vows till you have expiated your sins."

"How have I sinned?"

"You have sinned by pride, Soradaci, in fancying that I owed anything to you for having betrayed me by putting my letters into the Secretary's hands."

"How can I expiate that sin?"

"In this way. To-morrow, when Lorenzo comes, you must lie still on your mattress with your face to the wall without stirring, without even looking at him. If he speaks to you you must tell him, without looking at him, that you have been unable to sleep, and that you want rest. Will you promise me this?"

"I promise to do exactly as you bid me."

"Swear it before this holy image at once."

"I swear, Blessed Mother of God, that when Lorenzo comes in I will not look at him, nor stir on my mattress."

"And I, Most Holy Mother, swear by your Sacred Son, that if I see Soradaci make the smallest movement, or look at Lorenzo, I will rush on him and strangle him without mercy, to your honor and glory."

I relied quite as much on this threat as on his oath. Wishing, however, to be as secure as possible, I asked him whether he had any objection to raise to this pledge, and, after a moment's reflection, he said that he was content.

Well pleased with myself, I gave him some supper, and then bid him go to bed, for that I needed sleep. As soon as he was asleep I wrote for two hours. I told Balbi the whole story, saying that if his work was far enough advanced he need only come to the ceiling of my cell, to break through the last boards, and come in. I notified to him that we were to escape on the night of the 31st of October, and that we should be four, including his messmate and mine. It was now the 28th day of the month.

On the next day the monk wrote that the communication was complete, and there was no more for him to do but to get out on the top of my cell and break through the lowest surface, which could be done in five minutes.

Soradaci was faithful to his word, making believe to be asleep; Lorenzo did not even speak to him. I never took my eyes off him, and I believe I should have killed him if he had made the smallest attempt to look at Lorenzo; for a mere treacherous wink would have been enough to betray me.

The rest of the day was devoted to lofty discourse and exaggerated phrases, which I pronounced with all the gravity I could command; and I had the pleasure of seeing his fanatical excitement grow greater and greater. I took care to enhance the effect of my mystical preaching by a copious exhibition of wine, of which I gave him large draughts from time to time; and I never left him in peace till I saw him dropping with drunkenness and torpor.

Although he had no notion of metaphysical speculation, and had never exercised his wits for any purpose but to devise some spy's tricks, the brute embarrassed me for an instant by

saying that he could not imagine how an angel could need make so much work of opening our prison.

But I, raising my eyes to heaven—or rather to the ceiling of my dismal cell—replied:

"The ways of God are inscrutable to mortals; besides, the messenger of Heaven does not work as an angel, for then a mere breath would suffice; he labors as a man, having no doubt taken the form of a man, since we are unworthy to endure the glorious presence of a celestial being. But indeed," I added, like a true Jesuit, able to take advantage of every trifle, "I foresee that to punish you for your evil thought, which is an offense to the blessed Virgin, the angel will not come to-day. Wretched man! your thoughts are not those of an honest, pious soul, but of a vile sinner who is always dealing with Messer Grande and his servants."

I had hoped to make him miserable, and I had succeeded. He began to cry violently, and was choked with sobs when the clock had struck nineteen and he did not hear the angel. Far from soothing him, I tried to add to his despair by my own bitter lamentations. Next morning he was still obedient, for Lorenzo having inquired after his health, he replied without looking round. He behaved equally well next day, and at length I saw Lorenzo for the last time on the morning of the 31st of October. I gave him a book for Balbi, and desired the monk to come at about noon to pierce the ceiling. This time I feared no disaster, having learnt from Lorenzo that the Secretary and Inquisitors had already gone into the country. I had no reason to fear the advent of a new messmate, and I need no longer try to hoodwink my rascally companion.

When Lorenzo had left us I told Soradaci that the angel would come to make the opening in the ceiling of our cell at about eleven o'clock.

"He will bring a pair of scissors," said I, "and you must trim my beard and his."

"An angel with a beard!"

"Yes. You will see. When that is done, we will get out and force our way through the roof of the palace; then we will get down into the Piazza of St. Mark, and from thence make our way to Germany."

He made no reply. He ate by himself, for my heart and

mind were too full to allow of my eating. I had not even slept.

The hour strikes. Hark! the angel!

Soradaci was about to fall on his face, but I assured him that this was superfluous. In three minutes the hole was pierced through; the board fell at my feet, and Father Balbi slid into my arms.

"Your task is done," said I, "and now mine begins."

We embraced, and he gave me my crowbar and a pair of scissors. I desired Soradaci to trim our beards, but I could not help laughing as I saw the creature, open-mouthed, staring at this strange angel, who looked more like a demon. Though utterly bewildered, he cut our beards to perfection.

Being impatient to survey the locality, I desired the monk to remain with Soradaci, for I would not leave him alone, and I went out. I found the hole rather narrow; however, I got through. I got above the cell in which the Count lay; I went down and cordially embraced the venerable gentleman. I saw a man of a figure ill-suited to surmount the difficulties of such an escape over a steep roof covered with sheet lead. He asked me what my plan was, and told me that he thought I had been rather heedless in my action.

"I only want to go on," said I, "step by step to liberty or death."

"If you imagine," said he, "that you can pierce the roof and find a way along the leads—from which, too, you must get down—I do not see how you can possibly succeed unless you have wings. I have not courage enough to accompany you. I shall stay where I am and pray to God for you."

I left him, to inspect the outer roof, getting as close as I could to the outer side of the loft. Having succeeded in touching the inside of the rafters at the part where it was lowest, I perched myself on a beam, such are to be found under the roof of every large palace. I poked at the rafters with the end of my bar, and, to my joy, found them half-rotten; at each touch the wood fell in dust. Being sure, therefore, that I could make a large enough opening in less than an hour, I returned to my cell, and spent the next four hours in cutting up sheets, counterpanes, and mattress-covers, to make ropes of. I took care to tie all the knots myself, to be sure of their

firmness, for a single knot badly tied would have cost us our life. When all was done I found we had about a hundred yards of rope. There are certain things in every great enterprise which are of the highest importance, and for which a leader worthy of the name trusts no one.

When the rope was finished, I made a bundle of my coat, my silk cloak, some shirts, stockings, and handkerchiefs, and we all three went into the Count's cell. This worthy man first congratulated Soradaci on having been so lucky as to be put in the same room with me, and being so soon enabled to recover his freedom. The man's stupid amazement almost made me laugh. I no longer attempted any concealment, for I had thrown off the mask of Tartuffe, which I had found most inconvenient while this villain had compelled me to wear it. I saw that he was convinced I had deceived him, but he could not understand how; for he could not imagine how I had communicated with the sham angel so as to make him come and go at fixed hours. He was listening eagerly to the Count, who declared we were rushing on our fate; and, coward that he was, he was revolving in his mind a scheme for avoiding the perilous attempt. I told the monk to collect his things while I went to make the hole in the roof of the loft.

At two hours after sunset the hole was finished; I had worked the rafters to powder, and the opening was twice as large as was needful. I could touch the sheet of lead outside. I could not raise it single-handed because it was riveted; the friar helped me, and by pushing the crowbar between the gutter and the sheet of lead I detached it, then, raising it on our shoulders, we bent it up high enough to allow of our squeezing through the opening. Putting my head out to reconnoiter, I saw with dismay how bright the moon was, now in the first quarter. It was a check which we must endure with patience, and wait till midnight to escape, when the moon would have gone to light up the Antipodes. On such a glorious night all Venice would be out on the Piazza below, and we dared not venture out on the roof; our shadows cast on the ground would have attracted attention; our extraordinary appearance up there would excite general curiosity, and above all, that of Messer Grande and his spies, the sole guards of Venice. Our fine scheme would soon have been disturbed by

their odious interference. I therefore decided positively that we were not to creep out till the moon had set. I invoked the aid of God, and I asked for no miracle. Exposed as we were to the caprice of Fortune, I was bound to give her as few chances as possible, and if my enterprise was to fail, at any rate I would not have to reproach myself with having made a false move. The moon would go down by about five o'clock,[3] and the sun would not rise till half past thirteen; we should have seven hours of total darkness in which to act, and though we had a hard struggle before us, in seven hours we ought to get through it.

I said to Father Balbi that we might spend three hours in conversation with Count Asquino, and that he was to go to him first and ask him to lend me thirty sequins, which might be quite as necessary to me to do what remained to be done as my crowbar had been to bring me so far as this. He undertook the commission, but came back in five minutes to bid me go myself, as the old man wished to speak with me alone. The poor old man began by saying gently that I needed no money to make my escape; that he had none; that he had a large family; that if I perished in the attempt, any money he might give me would be lost: in short, endless futile excuses to disguise his avarice or the aversion he felt to parting with his coin. My reply lasted half an hour. Excellent reasons I gave him; but such as, since the creation of the world, never had the smallest effect, because all the forms of eloquence fall dead against the iron face of the most tenacious of passions. This was a case for *Nolenti baculus* (a stick for the obdurate), but I was not so cruel as to use violence against an unhappy old man. I ended by telling him that if he would escape with me I would carry him on my shoulders as Aeneas had carried Anchises; but that if he decided on remaining and beseeching God for our success, I warned him that his prayers would be unavailing, since he would be asking God to grant success to an enterprise which he would not help by the most obvious means.

He replied by shedding tears, which moved me deeply. He asked me whether two sequins would be enough; and I told him that I must make it enough. He gave them to me, beg-

[3] Soon after ten.

ging me to return them if, after walking round the roof, I saw that the wiser plan would be to return to my cell. This I promised, somewhat surprised that he should suppose I would ever make up my mind to retrace my steps. He did not know me; I felt I would certainly die rather than go back to a prison I should never afterwards quit alive.

I called my companion, and we placed all our parcels close to the opening. I divided the hundred yards of cord into two bundles, and we then spent two hours in talk reviewing, not without pleasure, the vicissitudes of our enterprise. The first evidence Balbi gave me of his noble soul was that he told me again and again that I had broken faith with him, since I had asserted that my scheme was complete, while it was not so. He had the insolence to tell me that if he had known it he would never have helped me out of my cell. The Count, with the gravity of seventy years, assured me that my better plan was not to pursue so rash an enterprise, which could not possibly succeed, while the risk of killing myself was evident. Being a lawyer, this was his statement of the case, but I could easily guess that what really prompted him was the thought of the two sequins I should have had to return to him if he had persuaded me to remain.

"The slope of the roof," said he, "being of lead, you cannot walk on it; at most, can you stand upright? That roof has indeed seven or eight dormer windows, but they are all barred with iron, and inaccessible in any way which would enable you to stand in front of them, since they all project beyond the edge. Your ropes will be useless, since you will find nothing to which to fasten them; and even if you should, a man descending from such a height can neither hold on nor guide himself to the ground. One of you three will therefore be obliged to tie the two others firmly round the body, one at a time, and let you down like a pail or a log; and the one who does it must return to his cell. Which of you three feels moved to do this charitable and dangerous deed? And even if one of you is so heroic, on which side of the palace will you attempt it, if you please? Not on the side where the columns are, on the Piazza, for there you would be seen; not by the church, for it is impossible—you would find yourself shut in; on the side by the courtyard it is vain to think of it—

you would fall into the hands of the *Arsenalotti,* who constantly make their rounds. So you can only descend on the side of the canal. And have you a gondola or a boat waiting for you? No. So you will be obliged to plunge into the water and swim to St. Apollonia, where you will arrive in a miserable condition, not knowing which way to turn to get any further. Remember that the leads are slippery, and that if you fell into the canal, even if you could swim like sharks, you would not escape death, seeing what the height is and the shallowness of the water. You would be dashed to pieces, for three or four feet of water are not a sufficient body of fluid to neutralize the momentum of a body falling from such a height. In short, the least disaster you can anticipate is to find yourself at the bottom of the canal with all your limbs broken."

This speech made my blood boil, imprudent as it was under the circumstances; however, I had enough fortitude to listen with a patience very unlike me. The friar's reproaches, of which he was not sparing, enraged me; I longed to retort on him severely, but I felt that my position was delicate, and I might ruin my undertaking; for I had to deal with a coward quite capable of telling me that he was not so desperate as to risk being killed, and that if I pleased I might go alone; but, alone, I could not flatter myself that I should succeed. So I controlled myself, and, taking a gentle tone, I told him that I was sure of success, though I could not inform them of all the details.

"Your wise advice," said I to Count Asquino, "will make me proceed with the greater caution; but my confidence in God and in my strength will enable me to overcome every difficulty."

Now and then I put out my hand to assure myself that Soradaci was there, for he never uttered a sound. I laughed to think what he might be revolving in his brain now that he knew I had cheated him. At about half-past four I told him to go to see in what part of the sky the moon stood; he obeyed, and returned to say that in an hour and a half it would have disappeared, and that a very thick fog was making the leads most dangerous.

"All I care for is that the fog should not be of oil," said I.

"Make a bundle of your cloak and part of the ropes, which we must divide between us."

At these words, to my astonishment, I felt the man on his knees to me, taking my hands and kissing them as he wept, beseeching me not to lead him to his death.

"I am certain," he said, "to fall into the canal. I cannot be of the smallest use to you. Leave me here, and I will spend the whole night entreating Saint Francis for you. You are master; you may kill me here; but I am determined not to go with you."

The idiot had no idea how he was anticipating my desires.

"You are right," said I. "Stay; but on condition of your praying to Saint Francis. And first of all go and fetch all my books, which I will leave to the Count."

He obeyed me, gladly I have no doubt. My books were worth at least a hundred crowns. The Count told me he would return them to me when I came back.

"You will see me no more," replied I; "you may rely on that. The books will cover the loss of the two sequins. As to this rascal, I am delighted that he is not brave enough to accompany us. He would be in the way; and, besides, such a wretch is not worthy to share with Father Balbi and myself the honors of such a splendid escape."

"Very true," said the Count; "unless he has reason to-morrow to congratulate himself."

I begged the Count to furnish me with pen, ink, and paper, with which he was supplied in spite of the rules; for prohibitions were as nothing to Lorenzo, who would have sold St. Mark himself for a crown-piece. I then wrote the following letter, which I entrusted to Soradaci, and which I could not read through, having written it in the dark. I began with a lofty motto, which I wrote in Latin, to this effect:—

" 'I shall not die, but live, and sing the praises of the Lord.'

"Their Highnesses the State Inquisitors have a right to do their utmost to keep the guilty by force under the Leads; the prisoner, glad not to be on parole, has a right to do his utmost to obtain his liberty. Their right is founded on justice; that of the prisoner on nature; and just as they do not ask his consent before shutting him up, he does not wait for theirs to recover his freedom.

"Jacques Casanova, who writes this in the bitterness of his heart, knows that it may be his misfortune to be recaptured before he can get out of the States of the Republic and find safety in a hospitable land, and that then he will be under the sword of those he hopes to escape from; but if such a misfortune befalls him, he invokes the humanity of his judges not to make his lot a worse one than he is endeavoring to flee from, by punishing him for yielding to the instincts of nature.

"He implores you if he is recaptured to return him all the things belonging to him which he has left in his cell; but if he is so happy as to succeed in his purpose, he makes it all a present to Francesco Soradaci, who remains in prison because he had not courage enough to run the risk. He does not, as I do, prefer liberty to life. Casanova beseeches your Excellencies not to deny him this gift.

"Written in the dark, one hour before midnight, in the Count Asquino's cell, October 31, 1756."

I desired Soradaci not to entrust this letter to Lorenzo, but to give it to the Secretary in person; for there could be no doubt that he would send for him, if he did not come up to the cells, which was even more likely. The Count said that there could be no doubt my letter would have the desired result, but that everything must be restored to me if I should reappear, and the simpleton said that he hoped he might see me again to prove how gladly he would do so.

But it was time to be off. The moon had set. I hung half the rope round Balbi's neck on one side and his bundle of clothes on the other shoulder. I did the same for myself; and both, in our waistcoats with our hats on, went to the opening in the roof.

"E quindi uscimmo a rimirar le stelle."[4]—DANTE.

CHAPTER VI

I CREPT out first; Balbi followed me. Soradaci, who had accompanied us to the roof, was ordered to pull the sheet of lead down again and then to go and pray to his saint. Crawling on my knees on all fours, I clutched my crowbar firmly, and,

[4] "We thence went out to see the stars once more."

stretching as far as I could, I slipped it obliquely between the points of the sheets; then, grasping the edge of the sheet I had turned up, I dragged myself up to the ridge of the roof. The friar, to follow me, inserted the fingers of his right hand into the belt of my breeches. Thus I had the double task of a beast which drags and carries both at once, and that on a steep roof, made slippery by a dense fog. Half-way up this dreadful climb Balbi bid me stop, for one of his parcels had fallen, and he hoped it might not have gone further than the gutter. My first impulse was to give him a kick and send him after his bundle; but, God be praised, I had enough self-command not to do this, for the punishment would have been too severe for both of us, since I alone could never have escaped. I asked him whether it was the packet of ropes, but as he replied that it was only his bundle, in which he had a manuscript he had found in the loft, and which he had hoped would make his fortune, I told him he must take patience, for that a step backwards would be fatal. The poor monk sighed, and, clinging still to my waistband, we climbed on again.

After having got over fifteen or sixteen sheets of lead with immense difficulty, we reached the ridge, on which I perched myself astride, and Balbi did the same. We had our backs to the island of San Giorgio Maggiore, and two hundred yards in front of us we saw the numerous cupolas of the church of Saint Mark, which is in fact part of the Ducal Palace; for the church of Saint Mark is, properly speaking, no more than the Doge's chapel, and certainly no sovereign can boast of a finer one. I began by relieving myself of my load, and desired my companion to follow my example. He tucked his bundle of ropes under him as best he might, but, wanting to take off his hat which inconvenienced him, he managed so badly that it rolled from ledge to ledge, and went to join the bundle of clothes in the canal. My poor comrade was in despair.

"A bad omen!" he exclaimed. "Here I am at once without a shirt, without a hat, and bereft of a precious manuscript containing a most curious and unknown history of the festivals at the Ducal Palace."

I, less disposed to be fierce than I had been when I was climbing, calmly assured him that these two little accidents

had nothing so extraordinary about them as that a superstitious spirit should regard them as ominous; that I did not think them so, and that they did not in the least discourage me.

"They should serve you, my good fellow," said I, "as a warning to be prudent and wise, and to suggest to you that God certainly protects us; for if your hat, instead of tumbling to the right, had slipped off to the left, we should have been lost. It would have fallen into the courtyard, where the guards must have found it, and it would of course have told them that there must be some one on the roof. We should have been recaptured at once."

After sitting for some minutes looking about me, I desired the monk to remain motionless till I should return, and I made my way forward, shuffling along astride on the roof without any difficulty, my bolt in my hand. I spent above an hour going about the roof, examining and observing every corner, but in vain; nowhere did I see anything to which I could attach a cord. I was in the greatest perplexity. I could not for a moment think of the canal, nor of the palace courtyard, and among the many cupolas of the church I saw nothing but precipitous walls leading to no open space. To get beyond the church to the *Canonica* I should have had to surmount such steep slopes that I had no hope of achieving it, and it was natural that I should reject as impossible everything that did not seem feasible. The situation in which I found myself required daring, but absolutely no rashness. It was such a dilemma as I imagine can have no parallel for difficulty in any moral question.

However, I had to come to some conclusion; I must either get away or return to my cell, never probably to leave it again; or, again, throw myself into the canal. In this predicament a great deal must be left to chance, and I must begin somewhere. I fixed my eyes on a dormer window on the side towards the canal, and about two-thirds of the way down. It was far enough from the spot we had started from to make me think that the loft it lighted was not connected with the prison I had broken out of. It could light only an attic, inhabited or vacant, over some room in the palace, where, when day should dawn, the doors no doubt would be opened. I was

morally certain that the attendants in the palace, even those of the Doge himself, who should happen to see us, would be eager to favor our escape rather than place us in the hands of justice, even if they had recognized us as the greatest of state criminals, so horrible was the Inquisition in their eyes.

With this idea I decided on inspecting that window, so, letting myself slip gently down, I soon was astride on the little roof. Then, resting my hands on the edge, I stretched my head out and succeeded in seeing and touching a little barred grating, behind which there was a window glazed with small panes set in lead. The window did not trouble me, but the grating, slight as it was, seemed to me an insurmountable difficulty, for without a file I could not get through the bars, and I only had my crowbar. I was checked, and began to lose heart, when a perfectly simple and natural incident revived my spirit.

Philosophical reader, if you will for an instant imagine yourself in my place, and picture to yourself the misery I had endured for fifteen months; if you will consider the perils to which I was exposed on a leaden roof where the least rash movement would have cost me my life; if, again, you reflect that I had but a few hours in which to surmount all the difficulties which might multiply at every step, and that in case of failure I might rely on double severity on the part of an iniquitous tribunal, the confession I am about to make with the candor of truth will not lower me in your eyes; above all, if you remember that the nature of man when in anxiety and distress is not to be half so cool as when he is at ease and calm.

It was the clock of Saint Mark's at this moment striking midnight which roused my spirit, and by a sudden shock brought me out of the perplexed frame of mind in which I found myself. That clock reminded me that the morning about to dawn was that of All Saints' Day; that, consequently of my saint's day—if indeed I had a patron saint—and my Jesuit confessor's prophecy recurred to my mind.

If a great misfortune sometimes makes a small mind devout, it is almost impossible that superstition should not have some share in the matter. The sound of the clock seemed to me a spoken charm which bid me act and promised me

success. Lying flat on the roof, with my head over the edge, I pushed my bar in above the frame which held the grating, determined to dislodge it bodily. In a quarter of an hour I had succeeded; the grating was in my hands unbroken, and having laid it by the side of the dormer I had no difficulty in breaking in the window, though the blood was flowing from a wound I had made in my left hand.

By the help of my bar I got back to the ridge of the roof in the same way as before, and made my way back to where I had left my companion. I found him desperate and raging; he abused me foully for having left him there so long. He declared he was only waiting for seven to strike to go back to prison.

"What did you think had become of me?"

"I thought you had fallen down some roof or wall."

"And you have no better way of expressing your joy at my return than by abusing me?"

"What have you been doing all this time?"

"Come with me and you will see."

Having gathered up my bundles, I made my way back to the window. When we were just over it I explained to Balbi exactly what I had done, and consulted him as to how we were to get into the loft through the window. The thing was quite easy for one of us; the other could let him down. But I did not see how the second man was to follow him, as there was no way of fixing the rope above the window. By going in and letting myself drop I might break my legs and arms, for I did not know the height of the window above the floor. To this wise argument, spoken with perfect friendliness, the brute replied in these words:

"Let me down, at any rate, and when I am in there you will have plenty of time to find out how you can follow me."

I confess that in my first impulse of indignation I was ready to stab him with my crowbar. A good genius saved me from doing so, and I did not even utter one word of reproach for his selfishness and baseness. On the contrary, I at once unrolled my bundle of rope, and fastening it firmly under his armpits I made him lie flat on his face, his feet outwards, and then let him down on to the roof of the dormer. When he was there, I made him go over the edge and into

the window as far as his hips, leaving his arms on the sill. I next slipped down to the little roof, as I had done before, lay down on my stomach, and holding the rope firmly, told the monk to let himself go without fear. When he had landed on the floor of the attic he undid the rope, and I, pulling it up, found that the height was above fifty feet. To jump this was too great a risk. As for the monk, now he was safe, after nearly two hours of anguish on a roof, where, I must own, his situation was far from comfortable, he called out to me to throw in the ropes, and he would take care of them. I, as may be supposed, took good care not to follow this absurd injunction.

Not knowing what to do, and awaiting some inspiration, I clambered once more to the ridge, and my eye falling on a spot near a cupola, which I had not yet examined, I made my way thither. I saw a little terrace or platform covered with lead, close to a large window closed with shutters. There was here a tub full of wet mortar with a trowel, and by the side a ladder, which I thought would be long enough to enable me to get down into the attic where my comrade was. This settled the question. I slipped my rope through the top rung, and dragged this awkward load as far as the window. I then had to get the clumsy mass into the window; it was above twelve yards long. The difficulty I had in doing it made me repent of having deprived myself of Balbi's assistance. I pushed the ladder along till one end was on the level of the dormer and the other projected by a third beyond the gutter. Then I slid down on to the dormer roof; I drew the ladder close to my side and fastened the rope to the eighth rung, after which I again allowed it to slip till it was parallel with the window. Then I did all I could to make it slip into the window, but I could not get it beyond the fifth rung because the end caught against the inner roof of the dormer, and no power on earth could get it any further without breaking either the ladder or the roof. There was nothing for it but to tilt the outer end, then the slope would allow it to slide in by its own weight. I might have placed the ladder across the window and have fastened the rope to it to let myself down, without any risk; but the ladder would have remained there, and next morning would have guided the

archers and Lorenzo to the spot where we might still be hiding.

I would not run the risk of losing by such an act of imprudence the fruit of so much labor and peril, and to conceal all our traces the ladder must be got entirely into the window. Having no one to help me, I decided on getting down to the gutter to tilt it, and attain my end. This in fact I did, but at so great a risk that but for a sort of miracle I should have paid for my daring with my life. I ventured to leave go of the cord that was attached to the ladder without any fear of its falling into the canal, because it was caught on the gutter by the third rung. Then, with my crowbar in my hand, I cautiously let myself slide down to the gutter by the side of the ladder; the marble ledge was against my toes, for I let myself down with my face to the roof. In this attitude I found strength enough to lift the ladder a few inches, and I had the satisfaction of seeing it go a foot further in. As the reader will understand, this diminished its weight very perceptibly. What I now wanted was to get it two feet further in, by lifting it enough; for after that I felt sure that, by climbing up to the roof of the dormer once more, I could, with the help of the rope, get it all the way in. To achieve this, I raised myself from my knees; but the force I was obliged to use to succeed made me slip, so that I suddenly found myself over the edge of the roof as far as my chest, supported only by my elbows.

It was an awful moment, which to this day I shudder to think of, and which it is perhaps impossible to conceive of in all its horror. The natural instinct of self-preservation made me almost unconsciously lean with all my might, supporting myself on my ribs, and I succeeded—miraculously, I felt inclined to say. Taking care not to relax my hold, I managed to raise myself with all the strength of my wrists, leaning at the same time on my stomach. Happily there was nothing to fear for the ladder, for the lucky—or rather the unlucky push which had cost me so dear, had sent it in more than three feet, which fixed it firmly.

Finding myself resting on the gutter literally on my wrists and my groin, I found that by moving my right side I could raise first one knee and then the other on to the parapet. Then I should be safe. However, my troubles were

not yet over, for the strain I was obliged to exert in order to succeed gave me such a nervous spasm that a violent attack of painful cramp seemed to cripple me completely. I did not lose my head, and remained perfectly still till the spasm was over, knowing that perfect stillness is the best cure for nervous cramps—I had often found it so. It was a frightful moment. A few minutes after, I gradually renewed my efforts. I succeeded in getting my knees against the gutter, and as soon as I had recovered my breath I carefuly raised the ladder, and at last got it to the angle where it was parallel with the window. Knowing enough of the laws of equilibrium and the lever, I now picked up my crowbar, and climbing in my old fashion, I hauled myself up to the roof and easily succeeded in tilting in the ladder, which the monk below received in his arms. I then flung in my clothes, the ropes and the broken pieces, and got down into the attic, where Balbi received me very heartily and took care to remove the ladder.

Arm in arm, we surveyed the dark room in which we found ourselves; it was thirty paces long by about twenty wide.

At one end we felt a double door formed of iron bars. This was unpromising, but laying my hand on the latch in the middle it yielded to pressure, and the door opened. We first felt our way round this fresh room, and then, trying to cross it, ran up against a table with armchairs and stools round it. We returned to the side where we had felt windows, and having opened one, by the dim starlight we could see nothing but steep roofs between domes. I did not for an instant think of escaping by the window; I must know where I was going, and I did not recognize the spot where we were. So I closed the window, and we went back to the first room, where we had left our baggage. Quite worn out, I let myself drop on to the floor, and putting a bundle of rope under my head, utterly bereft of all power of body or of mind, I fell into a sweet sleep. I gave myself up to it so passively, that even if I had known that death must be the end of it I could not have resisted it; and I remember distinctly that the pleasure of that sleep was perfectly delicious.

I slept for three hours and a half. The monk's shouting

and shaking could scarcely rouse me. He told me that it was past twelve (five in the morning), and that my sleeping was to him, quite inconceivable in such a situation as ours.

It was inconceivable to him, but not to me. My sleeping was quite involuntary. I had only succumbed to natural exhaustion—nature at bay, as I may say. Nor was my exhaustion surprising; for two days my agitation had prevented my taking any food or rest; and the efforts I had just made were almost superhuman, and enough to exhaust the strength of any man. However, this blessed sleep had restored my original energy, and I was delighted to see that the darkness had so far diminished as to enable me to act with more decision and promptitude.

As soon as I had glanced round me, I cried: "This is not a prison! There must be some way out quite easy to discover."

We examined the wall opposite to the iron gate, and in a very small recess I fancied I discerned a door. I felt about, and at last my fingers fell on a keyhole. I put in the end of my crowbar, and with two or three wrenches I opened it, and we found ourselves in a small room, where, on a table, there lay a key. I tried it in a door facing me, and, on turning it, saw that I had unlocked the door. I desired the monk to go to fetch our bundles, and after replacing the key on the table from which I had taken it, we went out and found ourselves in a corridor fitted with pigeon-holes full of papers. These were archives. I discovered a little stone staircase; down I went, and came to another. This, too, I descended, and found at the end a glass door, which I opened, and found myself in a room I knew. We were in the Doge's chancery office. I opened a window; it would have been easy to get out of it; but I should have got down into the labyrinth of little courts round the church of Saint Mark. Heaven preserve me from such folly!

On a desk I espied an iron punch, with a round point and a wooden handle, such as the clerks use for piercing parchment to attach the leaden seal with a string; of this I took possession. I opened the desk; in it was the copy of a letter announcing to the Commandant of Corfu a grant of three thousand sequins for the restoration of the old fortress.

I looked for the sequins; but they were not there. God knows how gladly I would have taken possession of them; and how I should have laughed at the friar if he had accused me of theft! I should have regarded such a windfall as a gift from heaven! Frankly, I should have considered them my own by right of conquest.

I went to the door of the room, and put my bolt into the lock, but perceiving instantly that I could not force it, I decided at once to break through one of the panels. I took care to choose the one where there were fewest knots in the wood, and, setting to work with my crowbar, I split and rent it as best I might. The monk did his best to help me with the punch I had found on the desk, trembling all the time at the echoing noise each time I tried to drive my tool into the wood. The noise must, indeed, have been audible at a considerable distance; I was well aware of the danger, but was compelled to run the risk.

In half an hour the hole was large enough; and that was fortunate, for I should have had great difficulty in making it larger without a saw. The edges of this gap were horrible to behold; they were set with teeth and jags to tear our clothes and our flesh. And it was five feet up. Having placed two stools side by side, we stood on these; the monk, crossing his arms, put his body through head foremost; I took him by the buttocks, and then by the legs, and succeeded in pushing him through. Although it was still dark I was not now uneasy, because I knew where we were. When my companion was outside I passed him out our bundles, excepting the ropes, which I left behind. I now placed a third stool on the top of the other two, and on this I mounted; the hole was now on the level of my thighs, and I put my body through as far as it would go, though with great difficulty, as the gap was very narrow; and as I had no hold to which to cling with my hands, and no one to push me as I had pushed Balbi, I desired him to put his arms round me and simply pull, even if he brought me through in fragments. He did so, and I had the fortitude to endure the horrible pain of my legs being frightfully torn; the blood streamed down them.

As soon as I had the joy of finding myself outside, I hastened to pick up my bundle, and after going down two flights

of steps, I easily opened the door leading to the corridor in which are the great doors of the main staircase, and that to the office of the *Savio alla Scrittura.* This great door was closed, as that of the hall of archives had been, and one look assured me that without a catapult to break it down, or a train of gunpowder to blow it up, it would be impossible to move it. My bolt in my hand seemed to say to me: "*Hic fines posuit.* You have done with me—you may leave me to my fate!" It was the instrument of my freedom, and I treasured it; it was worthy to hang as an *ex voto* on the altar of release and liberty.

Calmly resigned, and perfectly cool, I sat down, and desired my companion to do the same. "My part of the work is done," said I; "now God or good fortune must do the rest. I do not know whether the cleaners will think of coming to the palace to-day—All Saints' Day, or to-morrow—the Day of the Dead. If any one comes, the instant the door is opened I fly. You must follow at my heels; but if no one comes, here I stay. And if I die of hunger I cannot help it."

On hearing this the poor wretch flew into a rage. He called me a madman, a liar, desperate, deceitful, treacherous. I let him rave; I was immovable. Meanwhile the clock struck thirteen. Since the moment when I awoke in the attic only one hour had elapsed.

The first point of any importance was to change everything I had on. Father Balbi looked like a peasant, but he was not scratched; he was neither in rags nor covered with blood. His red flannel waistcoat and violet leather breeches were not torn; while I could only be an object of horror or pity, for I was bleeding and in tatters. Having turned my stockings down from my knees, the blood was streaming from two deep grazes I had got from the gutter; the hole in the door had torn my waistcoat, shirt, and breeches, my hips and legs. I had fearful scratches all over me. Tearing up some handkerchiefs, I bandaged myself as well as I could; I put on my fine coat, which on a winter's day must have had a comical effect; I tucked my hair into the bag as well as I could, put on a pair of clean stockings, a laced shirt—for want of a plain one—with two more over it, and I stuffed my pockets with stockings and handkerchiefs.

Everything else I tossed into a corner. My silk cloak I threw over the monk's shoulders, and the poor devil looked as if he had stolen it. I must have had very much the appearance of a man who, after leaving a ball, had fallen into very bad company. The bandages about my knees alone mismatched with my inopportune finery.

Thus dressed, with my fine hat trimmed with Spanish gold point and a white feather, I opened a window. My face was at once observed by some idlers in the palace courtyard, who, puzzled to imagine how such a person could be at that window so early in the morning, went to inform the keeper of the key. The door-keeper, fancying that he must have locked some one in the day before, went to fetch his keys, and came to open. I was vexed at having shown myself at the window, not knowing that in this fortune had befriended me; and I was sitting by the monk, who was talking nonsense, when the rattle of keys fell on my ear. Greatly excited, I rose, and putting my eye to a crack which happily divided the hinges of the door, I saw one man only, slowly coming up the steps with a bunch of large keys in his hand. I desired Balbi very earnestly not to say a word, to keep behind me, and follow me closely. I took my crowbar, holding it in my right hand hidden in my coat, and I placed myself in such a position with regard to the door as that I could fly the instant it was opened, and rush down the steps. I prayed heaven that the man might not show fight, for if he had I must have struck him down, and I was fully determined to do so.

The door was opened, and on seeing me the poor man stood petrified. Taking advantage of his amazement, without pausing, without speaking a word, I quickly went down the steps, the monk following me. Without looking as if I were running away, but walking at a good pace, I went by the magnificent Giant's Staircase, not listening to Balbi, who kept calling to me: "Come into the church!"

The door of the church is not twenty yards from the great stairs; but the churches of Venice were no longer, even then, a sanctuary for criminals, and no one took refuge there. This Balbi knew, but in his terror he had lost his memory. He told me afterwards that what urged him to press me

to go into the church was a religious impulse which drew him to the altar.

"Why did you not go alone then?"

"I would not forsake you."

He ought to have said: "I would not lose sight of you."

The refuge I hoped for was beyond the frontiers of the Most Serene Republic, and I began to make my way thither; I was there already in spirit, and I must take the body there. I went straight to the royal entrance of the Doge's Palace; and looking at no one, so as to attract less attention, I crossed the little square, went straight to the quay, and stepped into the first gondola I came to, saying aloud to the gondolier: "Take me to Fusina; call another man to help you." He was at hand, and while they cast off the rope I flung myself on the center cushion, while Balbi seated himself on a bench. His grotesque appearance, without a hat, and wearing a handsome cloak, and my unseasonable finery, must have made them take me for a charlatan or an astrologer.

As soon as we were round the corner by the custom-house, the men set to work to row vigorously through the canal of the Giudecca, along which we must go to reach Fusina, or rather Mestre, which was where I meant to go. Half-way down the canal I put out my head and said to the boatman in the stern: "Do you suppose we shall reach Mestre before nightfall?"

"But, signor, you bid me go to Fusina."

"You are a fool; I told you Mestre."

The other gondolier assured me that I was mistaken, and the gaby of a friar, a zealous Christian and a friend of truth, must need insist that I was in the wrong. I longed to give him a kick to punish him for his idiotcy; but reflecting that a man can only have common sense by the grace of God, I went into fits of laughter, admitting that I might be mistaken, but adding that I certainly intended to go to Mestre. No one replied till, presently, the master boatman said he was ready to take me to England if I liked.

"Bravo!" said I; "then go to Mestre."

"We shall be there in three-quarters of an hour; wind and tide are with us."

Very well content, I looked behind me at the canal, which seemed to me more beautiful than I had ever seen it, above all because there was not a single boat coming our way. The morning was delicious, the air pure, the first sunbeams glorious; my two young gondoliers rowed with as much ease as vigor. And reflecting on the dreadful night I had gone through, on the dangers I had escaped, on the freedom I was just beginning to taste and had in certain prospect, everything so moved my soul that, filled with gratitude to God, I was choked with emotion and melted into tears.

My adorable companion, who till now had not opened his lips but to take the part of the gondoliers, thought it his business now to console me, and the way he set to work made me, in fact, forget my delicious emotion and burst out laughing in so strange a way, that he fell into the contrary error and thought I had gone mad. The poor monk, as I have said, was an ass, and his malice was only the outcome of his stupidity. I had been under the painful necessity of making use of him; but, without meaning it, he was now near being my ruin. He was not to be convinced that while I had ordered the boatman to go to Fusina, I had intended to go to Mestre: the idea, he said, must have entered my head on the Grand Canal.

We reached Mestre. I could find no post-horses, but there were several *vetturini,* who drive quite as well, and I agreed with one to carry me to Treviso in an hour and a quarter. In three minutes the horses were harnessed, and supposing that Balbi was just behind me, I turned round to say, "Get in." But he was not to be seen. I told a stable-lad to go and find him, quite determined to give him a rating, for in such a predicament no delay was permissible. He came back to say that my companion was not to be found. I was furious. I thought of leaving him to his fate; but a sentiment of humanity checked me. I got out, I made inquiries; every one had seen him, but no one knew where he was or could be. I hunted the arcades of the High Street, and instinct prompting me to put my head into a café, I found the wretch at the counter, drinking chocolate and flirting with the barmaid. He saw me, pointed out that the girl was a pretty girl, and desired me to take a cup of chocolate and pay for his, for that

he had not a sou. Suppressing my indignation, "I will have none," said I. "Make haste!" and I gripped his arm so tight that he turned pale with the pain. I paid, and we went out, I trembling with rage. We got into the chaise, but hardly had we gone ten yards when I met a native of the town named Balbi Tomasi, a good fellow, but reputed to be one of the familiars of the Holy Office. He recognized me, and coming up to me he exclaimed:

"You, signore!—you here! I am delighted to see you. You have escaped then? How did you manage it?"

"I did not escape; I was released."

"That is impossible; for only last evening I was with Messer Grimani, and I should have heard of it."

Reader, you can more easily imagine my feelings at this moment than I can describe them. I was discovered, and by a man whom I believed to be paid to arrest me, and who to do so had only to wink at the first officer of the police—and Mestre was full of them. I told him to speak low, and getting out of the chaise, I begged him to come aside with me. I led him behind a house, and seeing that there was no one to watch me, and that I was close to a ditch beyond which lay the open fields, I drew out my crowbar and collared him. Perceiving my purpose he wrenched himself free, and jumped the ditch. Instantly, without looking back, he ran as fast as he could go in a straight line. As soon as he was some way off he relaxed his pace, and kissed his hand to me to wish me good luck. When I had lost sight of him, I thanked God that this man's agility had preserved me from committing a crime, for I was about to make an end of him, and it seemed that he meant no harm after all.

My position was terrible to contemplate. I was alone, and at open war with the Republic. I must sacrifice everything to my own immediate safety, and must reject no means which might conduce to that end.

Dejected as a man must be who has escaped such peril, I glanced contemptuously at the monk by whose delay we had been exposed to it, and got into the chaise again. I was thinking how I could be quit of this blunderer, who now dared not open his lips. We reached Treviso without further adventure, and I desired the post-master to have

horses in readiness by seventeen o'clock.[1] It was not, however, my intention to pursue my journey by post; in the first place I could not afford it, and in the second I was afraid of being tracked. The innkeeper asked me if I would not breakfast. I needed food to keep me alive, for I was almost dead of inanition; but I dared not accept. A quarter of an hour lost might be fatal. I was afraid of being overtaken, and blushing for it as long as I should live: for a wise man in the open country ought to be able to defy four hundred thousand; if he cannot hide himself he is a fool.

I went out of the Saint Thomas's gate as if I were going for a walk, and after following the high-road for about a mile, I cut across the fields, intending to keep to them till I should be out of the Republican territory. The shortest way was by Bassano; but I took the longest, for it was not impossible that they might be on the look-out for me at the nearest frontier; while it was hardly probable that they should imagine that I could take the road by Feltre, which was the longest way to get into the domain of the Bishop of Trent.

After walking for three hours, I dropped on the ground quite incapable of further exertion. I required some nourishment, or I must make up my mind to die where I lay. I told the monk to lay the cloak by me and go to a farmhouse I saw, to get something to eat, paying for it of course, and to bring it to me. I gave him the necessary money. He went off, saying he thought I had more courage.

This creature did not know what was meant by courage, but he was more strongly constituted than I; and no doubt had taken care before leaving his cell to line his stomach well. Besides, he had had some chocolate; and he was thin, and a monk, and his mind was not tortured by considerations of prudence and honor at the expense of his body.

Though the house was not an inn, the good farmer's wife sent me out an ample dinner, by a peasant girl, which cost me but thirty sous of Venice. After having satisfied my appetite, feeling that I could hardly keep awake I made haste to set out again, knowing pretty well where I was. After walking for four hours, I paused outside a hamlet, and found that I was twenty-four miles from Treviso. I was quite worn

[1] About ten in the morning.

out; my ankles were swelled, and my shoes torn and cut. There was but an hour of daylight. Lying down in the midst of a clump of trees, I made Father Balbi sit down by me, and spoke to this effect:

"We must try to get to Borgo di Valsugnano. It is the first town beyond the frontier of the Republic. There we shall be as safe as we should be in London, and we may then rest; but to get there we must take many precautions, and the first is to separate. You must go by the woods of Mantello, I will go by the hills; you by the easiest and shortest way, I by the longest and most difficult; you shall have some money, and I not a sou. I will make you a present of the cloak, which you can exchange for a peasant's cape and hat, and every one will take you for a peasant, for you fortunately have the face of one. Here is all the money I have left of Count Asquino's two sequins—twenty-seven lire; take them. You will reach Borgo to-morrow evening; I about twenty-four hours later. Wait for me at the first inn on the left, and you may rely on my coming. For to-night, I must sleep somewhere in a good bed, and Providence will enable me to find one; but I must be perfectly at ease in my mind, and in your company that is impossible. I am certain that by this time they are hunting for us in every direction, and that our description has been so accurately given, that we should be arrested in any inn which we ventured into together. You see the miserable condition I am in, and that ten hours' rest is really indispensable to me. So farewell; go your way, and leave me to go mine. I shall find a night's lodging somewhere in the neighborhood."

"I expected this," said Balbi. "But the only answer I can give you is to remind you of what you promised me when you induced me to break into your cell. You promised that we should never separate, so do not hope that I shall leave you. Your fate is mine, and mine yours. We shall find a good lodging for our money, and go to no inns. We shall not be arrested."

"Then you are determined not to follow the good advice I have offered you out of prudence?"

"Yes, quite determined."

"We shall see."

I rose, not without an effort. I measured his height, and laid it out on the ground; then, taking out my crowbar, I lay down, reclining on my left side, and with the utmost coolness I began to dig out the earth, making no reply to his further questions. After working for about a quarter of an hour I looked up at him sadly, and I told him that as a good Christian, I must bid him commend his soul to God, "for I am going to bury you here, alive or dead; or, if you are the stronger, you must bury me. This is the extremity to which your stupid obstinacy reduces me. However, you may run away—I shall not run after you."

As he made no reply I continued digging; but I confess I was beginning to be afraid that this brute would drive me to extremities, and I was determined to be rid of him.

At last, out of fear, or thinking better of it, he threw himself on his knees by my side. Not knowing his purpose, I turned my iron bar against him; but I had nothing to fear. "I will do whatever you please," said he.

So I embraced him, and having given him all the money I had, I repeated my promise to join him at Borgo. Though left without a sou, and obliged to cross two rivers, I congratulated myself on being rid of the company of a man of his quality; for, alone, I felt sure of escaping beyond the frontier of my beloved Republic.

CHAPTER VII

As soon as I saw Balbi at a safe distance I rose, and seeing, a little way off, a shepherd keeping his flock on a hill, I went to obtain some necessary information.

"My good fellow," said I, "what is the name of this village?"

"Val de Piadene, Signor."

I was surprised, for I had come much further on my way than I had supposed. I then asked him the names of the owners of five or six houses I saw in the neighborhood; and as it happened, all he mentioned were persons of my acquaintance, whom I would not get into trouble by going to them. Then I asked the name of a palazzo hard by, and he told me it belonged to the Grimani family; the head of this family was at this time one of the Inquisitors of State, and

he was probably here at this very moment, so I must take good care not to be seen there. At last, having inquired who was the owner of a red house in the distance, he told me it belonged to the head of the police.

My amazement was great, but bidding the shepherd adieu I mechanically went on, down the hill; and to this day I cannot imagine what instinct led me to the very house from which reason and fear alike ought to have withheld me. I went straight up to it, and I may say in all truth that it was not by any effort of free-will. If it is true, that each man has an invisible guide, a beneficent genius which leads him on to good fortune, as sometimes happened to Socrates, I must ascribe to mine the impulse which took me to the house of the man of all others whom I had most reason to dread. Be it as it may, it was the most daring thing I could possibly have done.

I went in without hesitation, indeed with an air of perfect ease, and seeing a child in the courtyard, playing with a top, I went up to him asking where his father was. Instead of replying, the child ran to call his mother, and in a moment I saw a very pretty woman, who politely asked me what I wanted of her husband, regretting that he was absent.

"I too am sorry," said I, "that my good gossip is not at home, while I am enchanted at this moment to make the acquaintance of his charming wife."

"Your gossip!" said she. "Then you are his excellency Signor Venturi? He told me you had been good enough to promise to stand godfather to our baby. I am delighted to make your acquaintance, and my husband will be grieved to be absent from home."

"I hope he will return before long, for I want to beg of him a night's lodging. I really cannot go anywhere in the state in which you see me."

"You shall have the best bed in the house, and I can give you a good supper. My husband will call to thank your excellency for the honor you have done us, as soon as he comes home. He has not been gone more than an hour with all his men, and I do not expect him back for two or three days."

"What keeps him so long, fair gossip?"

"Have you not heard that two prisoners have escaped from under the Leads? One is a patrician; the other a private gentleman named Casanova. My husband had a letter from Messer Grande, bidding him seek for them; if he finds them he will take them to Venice, if not he will return here. But he will hunt for them for at least three days."

"I am sorry it should happen so, dear gossip, but I do not wish to be in your way—all the more because I should be glad to go to bed directly."

"This minute; and my mother will wait upon you. But what has happened to your knees?"

"I had a fall, hunting in the mountains, and cut myself abominably; I lost a good deal of blood too, which has made me weak."

"Oh! *povero Signore!* But my mother will cure you."

She called her mother, and after telling her what I required she left us. The archer's pretty wife had not the instincts of her calling, for nothing could be more obviously fabulous than my story. Out hunting in a silk hat! Riding in white silk stockings, without a cloak and with no servant! Her husband would laugh at her on his return! But Heaven reward her for her thrice-blessed ignorance.

Her mother took care of me with all the politeness I might have looked for a woman of the first distinction. Very respectable and kind-hearted, she took the tone of a mother to me, and while she dressed my wounds spoke to me, calling me her son. The word sounded sweetly in my ears, and contributed not a little to my recovery by the pleasant emotions it roused in me.

This good mother, having examined my knees and hips, said in a kind voice that I should have to bear a little pain, but that I might be sure that I should be well by to-morrow. I was only to lay wet cloths on my wounds and keep quiet in bed, not stirring till the morrow. I promised to be patient and do as she bid me.

They brought me up a good supper, and I ate and drank with appetite; then I let her do what she would with me, and fell asleep in the very act. Indeed I believe she must have undressed me like a child, for I remembered nothing of it when I awoke; and I neither spoke nor thought. Though

I had eaten heartily, I had done so from the instinctive need of satisfying my hunger and recruiting my strength; and when I went to sleep I did but yield to an irresistible power, for physical exhaustion made me incapable of reasoning on what I did. I supped at an hour after sunset, and next morning when I awoke I heard thirteen strike.[1] I thought it was some magic.

Fairly awake, and understanding where I was, I hastened to get rid of my wet rags, and was surprised to find the skin quite dry over my scratches and to feel no pain whatever. I did my hair, I dressed in less than five minutes, and finding the door of my room open I went downstairs, crossed the courtyard and quitted the house, paying no heed to two men who were standing there and who were certainly two of the police. I hastily fled from the place where I had found the most benevolent hospitality, the most generous kindness, and best of all, recovered health and strength; though it was with a feeling of horror which I could not control that I thought of the imminent danger I had escaped. I shuddered involuntarily; and to this day, after so many years, I still shudder when I remember the risk I had so rashly incurred. I was amazed to think that I could have gone into that house, and, still more, that I should have got out again. I could not believe that I should not be pursued. For five hours I walked on over hill and dale, meeting no one but a few peasants, and never once looking behind me.

It was not yet noon when, as I went on my way, I was startled by the sound of a bell. I was on a hill. Casting my eyes towards the spot whence the sound came, I saw a little church in the hollow, and numbers of people going thither to mass. I took it into my head to go too. My spirit felt the need of expressing its gratitude for the special protection of Providence; and though all nature offered me a temple worthy of the Creator, habit attracted me to the church. When men are in the lowest depths, every idea that stirs their fancy appears as a divine inspiration. It was the Day of the Dead. I went down to the village, entered the church, and to my great surprise found myself face to face with Signor Marc-Antonio Grimani, nephew of the State Inquisitor,

[1] About six in the morning.

and Signora Maria Visani, his wife. They were not less astonished than I. I bowed to them and they to me, and after hearing mass I went away. Grimani followed me, alone. A little way off he came up with me and said to me, "What are you doing here, Casanova? Where is your companion?"

"I gave him what little money I had, that he might make off in another direction, while I am trying to find refuge hereabouts, but I have not a sou. If your excellency would give me something I should find it easier."

"I cannot give you anything; but on your way you will find some hermit friars, who will not let you die of hunger. But tell me how you got away from the Piombi."

"The story, though interesting, would be long. Meanwhile the hermits might very likely finish the provisions which are to save me from dying of hunger."

With this ironical sally I made him a bow and went on my way. Although I was in the greatest need, this refusal of an alms gave me keen pleasure. I felt myself much more of a gentleman than his Excellency who commended me to the benevolence of the hermit friars. At a later date, in Paris, I heard that his wife, having learned the facts, reproached him severely for his hard-heartedness. It is very certain that sentiments of benevolence and generosity lodge more often in the hearts of women than in our own.

I pursued my way till sunset. Tired, jaded, and dying of hunger, I stopped at a lonely house of decent appearance. I asked for the master. The housekeeper told me that he was away; he had gone to a wedding on the other side of the river, and would not be back for two days; but that on leaving he had bid her make any friends welcome. Providence? Fortune? Good luck?—What you will.

I went in. She gave me a good supper and a good bed. I perceived from the address on several letters that I was in the house of Messer Rombenchi—a consul, but of what nation I forget. I wrote him a letter, and left it for him, sealed. Having supped and slept well, I rose and dressed myself with some care; but I was forced to leave without giving the worthy housewife any token of my gratitude, and I crossed the river as if I were out for a walk, promising to pay the man on my return. After walking for five hours I got

a dinner at a monastery of Capuchin friars, whom I found very useful under such circumstances. Having thus refreshed myself, I set out again in very good case, and walked till about three hours after noon. I stopped at a house of which the master, as I learnt from a peasant, was a friend of mine. I went in and asked if he was at home; I was shown up to the room where he was sitting alone, writing. I went forward to embrace him, but on seeing me he gave a start of horror and bid me depart without a moment's delay, giving me the most frivolous and insulting reasons. I explained the situation I was in, and my necessities, and asked him to lend me sixty sequins on my note of hand, which promised that M. Bragadino would repay him. He replied that he could not help me, nor even offer me a glass of water, for merely seeing me in his house made him fear lest he should incur the wrath of the Tribunal. He was a man of about sixty, a stockbroker, who owed me much kindness. His barbarous refusal had a very different effect on me from Signor Grimani's. Whether from anger and indignation, or the instinctive rage of reason and nature, I seized him by the collar and, showing him my crowbar, threatened his life in a loud tone. Trembling with fear, he drew a key out of his pocket, and, pointing to a desk, told me that there was money in it, and that I had only to take what I wanted. I desired him to open it himself; he obeyed, and having opened a drawer in which there was some gold, I bid him count me out six sequins.

"But you asked for sixty!"

"Yes, when I expected them as a loan from a friend; but when I owe them to violence I will only have six, and you will have no promissory note. They will be repaid to you at Venice, where I will write the story of what you have compelled me to do—coward that you are! Unworthy to live!"

"Forgive me, I entreat you, and take all."

"No; not another sou. I am going, and I advise you to let me depart in peace, or in my despair I may return and set fire to your house."

I went away, and walked for a couple of hours, when darkness and fatigue compelled me to seek refuge in a la-

borer's house. There I had a bad supper, and slept on straw. Next morning I bought an old overcoat, I hired an ass to carry me on my way, and near Feltre I bought a pair of boots. It was in this outfit that I passed the wretched little fortress called La Scala. The sentinel did not even ask me my name, and I, as the reader may suppose, owed him no grudge for that. From thence I took a cart with two horses, and arrived early at Borgo di Valsugnano, where I joined Father Balbi at the inn I had mentioned. If he had not addressed me first I should not have recognized him. A large riding-coat and a broad-brimmed hat over a cotton nightcap completely disguised him. He told me that a farmer had given him all this in exchange for my cloak, that he had arrived without hindrance, and had fed well on the way. He paid me the compliment of saying that he had not expected to see me, for he had not believed my word when I promised to join him. Perhaps I might have been wiser if I had not undeceived him.

I spent the next day at the inn, whence, without leaving my bed, I wrote about twenty letters to Venice; ten or a dozen were circulars in which I reported what I had been obliged to do to procure the six sequins.

The monk wrote some impertinent notes to Father Barbarigo, his Superior, and the patricians his brothers. I took the lace off my coat, and sold my hat, divesting myself of such luxury as did not beseem my situation, for it attracted too much notice.

Next day I went on to Pergine, where I slept, and a young Count d'Alberg came to see me, having heard, I know not how, that we had escaped from the State prisons of Venice. From Pergine I made my way to Trent, and then to Bolzano, where, needing money to buy some linen and carry me on my journey, I applied to an old banker named Mensch, who recommended me a trustworthy messenger to send to Venice with a letter to Signor Bragadino.

The old banker sent me to a good inn, where I spent six days in bed while the messenger went and returned. He brought me a hundred sequins, and I at once clothed my comrade and then took the same trouble for myself. This wretched Balbi every day gave me fresh cause for hating his society.

He was forever saying that but for him I could never have escaped, and that by my promise I owed him half of my prospective fortune. And although he was a source of occasional amusement, I was grieved at being bound to so contemptible a fellow.

We traveled by post for three days, which brought us to Munich, where I lodged at the Hart Inn. I there met two young Venetians of the Cantarini family, who had been there for some time escorted by Count Pompei, a Veronese; but not knowing them, I did not trouble myself to pay my respects to them. It was different with regard to the Countess Coronini, whom I had known at Venice at the convent of Santa Giustina, and who was a favorite at court.

This noble lady, then seventy years of age, received me very kindly, and promised to make interest with the Elector to grant me the right of refuge. Next day, having fulfilled her promise, she told me that his Highness knew nothing against me which should prevent his granting me asylum in his dominions; but that Balbi could not be safe in Bavaria, since, as an escaped monk, he might be seized by the friars of his order in Munich, and his Highness would not have any squabbles with those monks. The Countess consequently advised me to get him out of the town as quickly as possible. Feeling it a matter of conscience to take care of the poor devil, I went to the Elector's confessor to ask him for a recommendation for Balbi to some town in Swabia. This confessor did not belie the noble training of the sons of Loyola. He received me as ill as possible, and told me by way of dismissal that I was thoroughly well known in Munich.

I asked him in a steady tone whether he said this by way of good or of ill news; he made no reply, but simply left me. Another priest told me that he had gone out to verify a miracle, of which every one was talking.

"What miracle is that, Father?" said I.

"The Empress, widow of Charles the Seventh, who is lying in state, still has warm feet though she is dead."

"There is something that warms them perhaps?"

"You can go and see for yourself."

Now a miracle is not to be seen every day, and to miss this one would have been to lose a laugh or a lesson; and

I was as ready for one as for the other. Eager to be able to say that I had seen a miracle—all the more interesting to me because my own feet, unluckily, are always cold—I hurried off to see the illustrious dead. Her feet, in fact, were warm, but nothing could be simpler, for her late Majesty had quite near her a hot stove.

A dancer whom I knew, and who had followed the crowd out of curiosity, came up to me, complimented me on my happy escape, and told me that all the town was talking of it with interest; this news pleased me, for it is always well to interest the public. This man asked me to dinner, and I accepted with pleasure; his name was Michel dell'Agata, and his wife was the pretty Gandela whom I had seen sixteen years before. She was delighted to hear the story of my laborious escape from my own lips. She interested herself for the monk, and offered me a letter of introduction to the Canon Bassi, a Bolognese, at Augsburg, a friend of hers, and Dean of the Chapter of St. Moritz. I accepted, and she wrote then and there, assuring me that I need trouble myself no further about the friar, for that she was sure the Dean would take charge of him and could soon procure his forgiveness at Venice.

Delighted to be rid of him on such honorable terms, I ran back to the inn, told him the facts, and gave him the letter, promising not to forsake him in the event of the Canon receiving him ill. I found him a good carriage and sent him off next morning at daybreak. Four days later Balbi wrote me that the Canon's reception was all that could be wished, that he had lodged him in his own house, dressed him as an Abbé, introduced him to the Prince-Bishop of Darmstadt and to the magistrates of the town. He had also promised to keep him till he could be discharged of his vows and get leave to return to Venice, since as soon as he was unfrocked he would be no longer guilty in the eyes of the State Inquisitors. Father Balbi ended by requesting me to send him a few sequins for pocket-money, for that he was too magnanimous to ask it of the Dean, who—the graceless wretch added—was not generous enough to offer him any. I did not answer his letter.

Now, being alone and at peace, I seriously began to take

care of my health, for all I had gone through left me with nervous spasms, which might have taken a bad turn. However, I took proper care of myself, and in three weeks I was quite well.

Just at this time Madame Rivière came from Dresden with her son and two daughters; she was on her way to Paris to marry the elder. This amiable family were charmed to meet me again, and I thought myself lucky when Madame Rivière, anticipating my desires, gave me to understand that my company as far as Paris would be agreeable to them. I was not to think of the expense of the journey; the whole thing was a gift and I was to accept. As it was my intention to settle in Paris, this stroke of fortune made me think that good luck awaited me.

Madame Rivière would have had me start with her, but she could not postpone her departure, and I was forced to wait a week for some money and letters at Venice. She promised to await me at Strasbourg, and set out on the 10th of December.

I received the letter of exchange I expected only two days later, and joined Madame Rivière and her charming family at Strasbourg, where they welcomed me with every expression of gladness. We reached Paris on Wednesday the 5th of January, 1757, and I went straight to the house of my friend Baletti, who received me with open arms, assuring me that, although I had not written, he expected me, since my escape must require me to quit Venice as soon as possible, and he could not imagine that I should choose any place of residence but Paris.

THE END

BARON FREDERIC TRENCK

HERO OF THE MOST STUPENDOUS PRISON ESCAPES IN HISTORY

1726-1794

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Frederic Trenck, soldier-baron and adventurer, was born in Prussia. When only sixteen he received a commission in the guard of Frederick the Great, and rapidly rose to favor. A love affair with the King's sister destroyed Frederick's confidence in the brilliant young soldier, and he was imprisoned upon the discovery of a secret correspondence—in itself innocent—with his Austrian cousin, an equally famous and gallant Baron Trenck. Then followed daring escapes, perilous flights to foreign countries, miraculous success in strange lands, and more disgraces.

Trenck's adventurous life reads like the highly spiced traditional romance of the cavalier, and he tells it with an irresistible drollery and impudence, with amusing braggadocio and sudden temptestuous gusts of passion. He is the type of hero we always imagined ourselves, as very small boys, continually defying and confounding our enemies, and escaping the vengeance of an outwitted multitude.

Yet all Trenck's daring and brilliancy could not save him from terrible months in prison dungeons, horribly chained, hand and foot and neck; months that tried the soul of the man but could not break the courage of his spirit. True, he was a rascal, a rather selfish, egotistical rascal, but his faults and failings were induced rather by the tyrannous conditions under which he lived than by innate evil. His is a vastly entertaining tale of a strong man, rather given to exaggeration, but telling a strong story of life's rewards and punishments. All the clever escapes and escapades so dashingly recounted in his memoirs fail to hide the underlying hopes and beliefs of Baron Trenck's very human heart.

THE LIFE OF BARON TRENCK

CONTAINING HIS ADVENTURES AND CRUEL AND EXCESSIVE SUFFERINGS

I

I WAS born at Konigsberg, in Prussia, February 16, 1726, of one of the most ancient families of the country. My father,

who was a knight of the military order, lord of Great Scharlack, Schakulack, and Meicken, and major-general of cavalry, died in 1740, after having received eighteen wounds in the Prussian service. My mother, descended from the house of Derschau, was daughter of the president of the high court at Konigsberg; she had two brothers, generals of infantry, and a third, minister of state and postmaster-general at Berlin. After my father's death, in 1740, she married Count Lostange, lieutenant-colonel in the Kiow regiment of cuirassiers, with whom, leaving Prussia, she went and resided at Breslaw. I had two brothers and a sister: my youngest brother was taken by my mother into Silesia; the other was a cornet in the last-named regiment of Kiow; and my sister was married to the only son of the aged General Valdow, who quitted the service, and with whom she lived in Brandenburg, on his estates.

My ancestors, both of the male and female line, are famous in the chronicles of the north, among the ancient Teutonic knights, who conquered Courland, Prussia, and Livonia.

I seek not, by this recital, to gain estimation, much less to vaunt of the accident of noble birth, which, unsupported by a noble mind, I hold in sovereign contempt.

My reason for insisting on this circumstance is, that it has been contested and denied by some, who deem high birth to be the only test and standard of merit.

I write not, however, to a circle so narrow or ill-judging, but to the liberal and the wise—to the world at large—hoping my story may afford useful lessons of morality, inspiring patience, hope, and fortitude. Enough therefore of, and forever adieu to, my noble ancestry: what I have said is sufficient to rescue my children from all pretended obloquy, to show they are not vassals born, and, as I trust, to inspire them with emulation, remembering the examples left by their forefathers, and that their name is Trenck.

By temperament I was choleric, and addicted to pleasure and dissipation: my tutors found this last defect most difficult to overcome; happily, they were aided by a love of knowledge inherent in me, an emulative spirit, and a thirst of fame, which disposition it was my father's care to cherish.

A too great consciousness of innate worth gave me a too great degree of pride; but the endeavors of my instructor to

inspire humility were not all lost, and habitual reading, well-timed praise, and the pleasures flowing from science, made the labors of study at length my recreation.

My memory became remarkable; I was well read in the Holy Scriptures, the classics, and ancient history; was intimately acquainted with geography; could draw accurately, and learned fencing, riding, and other necessary exercises.

My religion was Lutheran; but morality, and not superstitious bigotry, or childish fears, was taught me by my father, and by the worthy man to whose care he committed the forming of my heart, whose memory I shall ever hold in veneration. While a boy, I was enterprising in all the tricks of boys, and exercised my wit in crafty excuses; the warmth of my passions, then and afterward, gave a satiric, biting cast to my writings, whence it has been imagined, by those who knew but little of me, I was a dangerous man; though I was conscious, this was a hasty and false judgment.

A soldier himself, my father would have all his sons the same: thus when we quarreled, we were not admitted to terminate our disputes in the common way, but were provided with wooden sabers, sheathed with leather, and brandishing these, contested blows for victory, while our father sat laughing, pleased at our valor and address. This practice, and the praises he bestowed, had the bad effect of encouraging a disposition which, with passions like mine, ought carefully to have been counteracted.

Covetous of praise, and accustomed to obtain the prize, and be the hero of scholastic contentions, I acquired also the bad habit of disputation, and of imagining myself a sage when little more than a boy. I became stubborn in argument; hasty to correct others, instead of patiently attentive; and, by my presumption, continually liable to incite enmity.

Gentle to my inferiors, but impatient of contradiction, and proud of resisting power, I may hence date the origin of all my evils. The abhorrence which I had of despotism and its abuses, for the silent acquiescence in which my education and book-taught principles but ill fitted me, was an additional cause.

How might a man, however great his talents, imbued with heroic principles of liberty, hope advancement and happiness

under the despotic and iron government of Frederick? I was taught neither to know nor avoid, but to despise, the whip of slavery. Had I learnt hypocrisy, craft, and meanness, I had long since become field-marshal, had been in quiet possession of my vast Hungarian estates, and not passed the best years of my life in the dungeons of Magdeburg. I was addicted to no vice; I labored in the cause of science, honor, and virtue; kept no vicious company; was never, during the whole course of my life, once intoxicated; was no gamester, no consumer of time in idleness nor brutal pleasures; but devoted many hundred laborious nights to studies that might make me useful to my country; yet was I punished with a severity too cruel even for the most worthless or most villainous.

I mean, in my narrative, to make candor and veracity my guides, and never to conceal or screen my failings: I wish my work may remain an instructive and moral lesson to the world. Yet is it an innate and inexpressible satisfaction, that I am conscious of never having acted with guilt or dishonor, even to the last act of this distressing tragedy.

I shall say little more of the first years of my life, except that my father, who had a tender affection for me, took especial care of my education, and sent me, at the age of thirteen, to the university of Konigsberg, where, under the tuition of Kowalewsky, my progress was rapid. There were fourteen other noblemen, of the best families, in the same house, and under the same master.

II

The year following, that is to say, 1740, I had a quarrel with one young Wallenrodt, a fellow-student, much stronger and taller than myself, and who, despising my weakness, thought proper to give me a blow. I demanded satisfaction—he came not to the appointed place, but treated my demand with contempt; and I, forgetting all further respect, procured a second, and attacked him in open day. We fought, and I had the fortune to wound him twice; the first time in the arm, the second in the hand.

This affair incited inquiry:—Doctor Kowalewsky, our tutor, laid complaints before the university, and I was condemned

to three hours confinement; but my grandfather and guardian, President Derschau, with whom I was a great favorite, was so pleased with my courage, that he instantly took me from this house, and placed me under Professor Christiani.

Here I first began to enjoy full and entire liberty; and from this worthy man I learnt all I know of experimental philosophy and science. He loved me as his own son, and sometimes continued instructing me till midnight. Under his auspices, 1742, I maintained, with great success, two public theses, although I was then but sixteen—an effort and an honor till then unknown.

Three days after my last public exordium, a contemptible fellow, and professional bully, sought a quarrel with me, and, as I may say, obliged me to draw in my own defense, whom, on this occasion, I wounded in the groin.

This continued success highly inflated my valor, and from that time I began to wear a sword of enormous length, and to assume the accouterments and appearance of an Hector.

Such was the effect of prejudices inspired in youth, and which would inevitably have made me a quarrelsome, dangerous man, had not the rectitude of my heart and the extreme miseries of which I became the victim, soon conducted me again to the path of virtue.

Scarcely had a fortnight elapsed after this last affair, before I had another with a lieutenant of the garrison, one of my friends, whom I had insulted, who received two wounds in the contest.

I ought to remark that, at this time, the university of Konigsberg was still highly privileged. To send a challenge was held honorable; and this was not only permitted, but would have been difficult to prevent, considering the great number of proud, hot-headed, turbulent young nobility from Livonia, Courland, Sweden, Denmark, and Poland, who came there to study, and of whom there were more than five hundred. This brought the university into disrepute, and endeavors have been made to remedy the abuse. Men have acquired a greater extent of true knowledge, and have begun to perceive that a university ought to be a place of instruction, and not a field of battle; and that blood cannot be honorably shed, except in defense of life and country.

In November, 1742, the king sent his adjutant-general, Baron Lottom, who was related to my mother, to Konigsberg, with whom I dined at my grandfather's. He conversed much with me; and after putting various questions, purposely to discover what my talents and inclinations were, he demanded as if in joke, whether I had any inclination to go with him to Berlin, and serve my country, as my ancestors had ever done: adding, that in the army, I should find much better opportunities of sending challenges than at the university. Inflamed with the desire of distinguishing myself, I listened with rapture to the proposition, and in a few days we departed for Potsdam.

On the morrow after my arrival, I was presented to the king, as indeed I had before been in the year 1740, with the character of being then one of the most hopeful youths of the university. My reception was most flattering; the justness of my replies to the questions he asked, my height, figure, and confidence, pleased him; and I soon obtained permission to enter as a cadet in his body-guards, with a promise of quick preferment.

The body-guards formed, at this time, a model and school for the Prussian cavalry. They consisted of one single squadron of men, selected from the whole army, and their uniform was the most splendid in Europe. Two thousand rix-dollars were necessary to equip an officer: the cuirass was wholly plated with silver; and the horse furniture and accouterments alone cost four hundred rix-dollars.

This squadron only contained six officers, and a hundred and forty-four men; but there were always fifty or sixty supernumeraries, and as many horses; for the king incorporated all the most handsome men he found in these guards. The officers were the best taught of any the army contained; the king himself was their tutor, and he afterwards sent them to instruct the cavalry in maneuvers they had learnt. Their rise was rapid, if they behaved well; but they were broken for the least fault, and punished by being sent to a garrison regiment. It was likewise necessary they should be tolerably rich, as well as possess such talents as might be successfully employed, both at court and in the army.

There are no soldiers in the world who undergo so much

as this body-guard; and during the time I was in the service of Frederick, I often had not eight hours sleep in eight days. Exercise began at four in the morning, and experiments were made of all the alterations the king meant to introduce in his cavalry. Ditches of three, four, five, six feet, and still wider, were leaped, till some one broke his neck; hedges, in like manner, were freed; and the horses ran career, meeting each other full speed, in a kind of lists of more than half a league in length. We had frequently in these, our exercises, several men and horses killed or wounded.

It happened, more frequently than otherwise, that the same experiments were repeated after dinner with fresh horses; and it was not uncommon, at Potsdam, to hear the alarm sounded twice in a night. The horses stood in the king's stables; and whoever had not dressed, armed himself, saddled his horse, mounted, and appeared before the palace in eight minutes, was under arrest for fourteen days.

Scarcely were the eyes closed, before the trumpet again sounded, to accustom youth to vigilance. I lost, in one year, three horses, which had either broken their legs in leaping ditches, or died of fatigue.

I cannot give a stronger picture of this service, than by saying, that the body-guard lost more men and horses in one year's peace, than they did during the following year in two battles.

We had at this time three stations: our service in the winter was at Berlin, where we attended the opera, and all public festivals; in the spring we were exercised at Charlottenburg; and at Potsdam, or wherever the king went, during the summer. The six officers of the guard dined with the king, and on gala days with the queen. It may be presumed there was not at that time on earth, a better school to form an officer and a man of the world than was the court of Berlin.

I had scarcely been six weeks a cadet, before the king took me aside one day after the parade, and having examined me nearly half an hour on various subjects, commanded me to come and speak to him on the morrow.

His attention was to find whether the accounts that had been given him of my memory had not been exaggerated; and that he might be convinced, he first gave me the names of

fifty soldiers to learn by rote, which I did in five minutes. He next repeated the subjects of two letters, which I immediately composed in French and Latin; the one I wrote, the other I dictated.

He afterwards ordered me to trace, with promptitude, a landscape, from nature, which I executed with equal success; and he then gave me a cornet's commission in his body-guards.

Each mark of bounty from the monarch increased an ardor already great, inspired me with gratitude, and the first of my wishes was to devote my whole life to the service of my king and country. He spoke to me as a sovereign should speak, like a father, like one who knew well how to estimate the gifts bestowed on me by nature; and perceiving, or rather feeling, how much he might expect from me, became at once my instructor and my friend.

Thus did I remain a cadet only six weeks; and few Prussians can vaunt, under the reign of Frederick, of equal good fortune.

The king not only presented me with a commission, but equipped me splendidly for the service. Thus did I suddenly find myself a courtier, and an officer in the finest, bravest, and best-disciplined corps in Europe. My good fortune seemed unlimited, when, in the month of August, 1743, the king selected me to go and instruct the Silesian cavalry in the new maneuvers, an honor never before granted to a youth of eighteen.

Pollnitz was my guide, and the friend of my heart. My happiness was well worthy being envied. In 1743, I was five feet eleven inches in height; and nature had endowed me with every requisite to please. I lived, as I vainly imagined, without exciting enmity or malice, and my mind was wholly occupied by the desire of earning well-founded fame.

I had hitherto remained ignorant of love, and had been terrified from illicit commerce by beholding the dreadful objects of the hospital at Potsdam. During the winter of 1743, the nuptials of his majesty's sister was celebrated, who was married to the king of Sweden, where she is at present queen-dowager, mother of the reigning Gustavus. I, as officer of my corps, had the honor to mount guard, and escort her as far as

Stettin. Here first did my heart feel a passion, of which, in the course of my history, I shall have frequent occasion to speak. The object of my love was one whom I can only remember at present with reverence; and, as I write not romance but facts, I shall here briefly say, ours were mutually the first fruits of affection, and that to this hour I regret no misfortune, no misery, with which, from a stock so noble, my destiny was overshadowed. Amid the tumult inseparable to occasions like these, on which it was my duty to maintain order, a thief had the address to steal my watch, and cut away part of the gold fringe which hung from the waistcoat of my uniform, and afterwards to escape unperceived. This accident brought on me the raillery of my comrades, and the lady alluded to thence took occasion to console me by saying, "it should be her care that I should be no loser." Her words were accompanied by a look I could not misunderstand; and a few days after, I thought myself the happiest of mortals. The name, however, of this high-born lady is a secret, which must descend with me to the grave; and though my silence concerning this incident leaves a void in my life, and indeed throws obscurity over a part of it which might else be clear, I would much rather incur this reproach, than become ungrateful toward my best friend and benefactress. To her conversation, to her prudence, to her power by which she fixed my affections wholly on herself, am I indebted for the improvement and polishing of my bodily and mental qualities. She never despised, betrayed, or abandoned me, even in the deepest of my distress; and my children alone, on my deathbed, shall be taught the name of her to whom they owe the preservation of their father, and consequently their own existence.

I lived at this time perfectly happy at Berlin, and highly esteemed. The king took every opportunity to testify his approbation; my mistress supplied me with more money than I could expend; and I was presently the best equipped, and made the greatest figure, of any officer in the whole corps. The style in which I lived was remarked; for I had only received from my father's heritage the estate of Great Scharlach, the rent of which was eight hundred dollars a year, which was far from sufficient to supply my then expenses. My

amour in the meantime remained a secret from my best and most intimate friends. Twice was my absence from Potsdam and Charlottenburg discovered, and I was put under arrest; but the king seemed satisfied with the excuses I made, under pretext of having been hunting, and smiled as he granted my pardon.

Never did the days of youth glide away with more apparent success and pleasure than during these my first years at Berlin. This good fortune was, alas! also of short duration. Many are the incidents I might relate, but which I shall omit. My other adventures are sufficiently numerous, without mingling such as may any way seem foreign to the subject. In this gloomy history of my life, I wish to paint myself such as I am; and, by the recital of my sufferings, afford a memorable example to the world, and interest the heart of sensibility. I would also show how my fatal destiny has deprived my children of an immense fortune; and though I want a hundred thousand men to enforce and insure my rights, I will leave demonstration to my heirs that they are incontestable.

III

About the beginning of September, 1744, war again broke out between the house of Austria and Prussia. We marched with all speed toward Prague, traversing Saxony without opposition. I will not relate, in this place, what the great Frederick said to me, with evident emotion, when surrounded by all his officers, on the morning of our hasty departure from Potsdam.

Should any one be desirous of writing the lives of him and his opponent, Maria Theresa, without flattery and without fear, let him apply to me, and I will relate anecdotes most surprising on this subject, unknown to all but myself, and which never must appear under my own name.

All monarchs going to war have reason on their side; and the churches of both parties resound with prayers and appeals to Divine Justice, for the success of their arms. Frederick, on this occasion, had recourse to them with regret, of which I was a witness.

If I am not mistaken, the king's army came before Prague on the fourteenth of September; and that of General

Schwerin, which had passed through Silesia, arrived the next day on the other side of the Moldan. In this position we were obliged to wait some days for pontoons, without which we could not establish a communication between the two armies.

The height called Zischka, which overlooks the city, being guarded only by a few Croats, was instantly seized, without opposition, by some grenadiers; and the batteries erected at the foot of that mountain, being ready on the fifth day, played with such success on the old town, with bombs and red-hot balls, that it was set on fire. The king made every effort to take the city, before Prince Charles could bring his army from the Rhine to its relief.

General Haasch thought proper to capitulate, after a siege of twelve days, during which not more than five hundred men of the garrison, at the utmost, were killed and wounded, though eighteen thousand men were made prisoners.

Thus far we had met with no impediment. The Imperial army, however, under the command of Prince Charles of Lorraine, having quitted the banks of the Rhine, was advancing to save Bohemia.

During this campaign we saw the enemy only at a distance; but the Austrian light troops being thrice as numerous as ours, prevented us from foraging. Winter was approaching; death and hunger made Frederick determine to retreat, without the least hope from the countries in our rear, which we had entirely laid waste as we had advanced.

Under such circumstances, had Prince Charles continued to harass us by pursuing us into Silesia; had he made a winter campaign, instead of remaining indolently at ease in Bohemia, we certainly should not have vanquished him the year following, at Strigau; but he only followed at a distance, as far as the Bohemian frontiers. This gave Frederick time to recover, and the more effectually, because the Austrians had the imprudence to permit the return of deserters.

No one would have been better able to give a faithful history of this campaign than myself, had I room in this place, and had I at that time been more attentive to things of moment; since I not only performed the office of adjutant to the king, when he went to reconnoiter, or choose a place of encampment, but it was, moreover, my duty to provide forage

for the headquarters. The king having only permitted me to take six volunteers from the body-guards to execute this latter duty, I was obliged to add to them horse chasseurs and hussars, with whom I was continually in motion. I was peculiarly fortunate on two occasions, by happening to come after the enemy, when they had left loaded wagons and forage bundles.

I seldom passed the night in my tent during this campaign: and my indefatigable activity obtained the favor and entire confidence of Frederick. Nothing so much contributed to inspire me with emulation as the public praises I received, and my enthusiasm wished to perform wonders. The campaign, however, but ill supplied me with opportunities to display my youthful ardor.

One day while at Bennaschen, I was commanded out with a detachment of thirty hussars and twenty chasseurs on a foraging party. I had posted my hussars in a convent, and gone myself with the chasseurs to a mansion-house, to seize the carts necessary for the conveyance of the hay and straw from a neighboring farm. An Austrian lieutenant of hussars, concealed with thirty-six horsemen in a wood, having remarked the weakness of my escort, taking advantage of the moment when my people were all employed in loading the carts, first seized our sentinel, and then fell suddenly upon them, and took them all prisoners in the very farmyard. At this moment I was seated at my ease, beside the lady of the mansion-house, and was a spectator of the whole transaction through the window.

I was ashamed of, and in despair at my negligence. The kind lady wished to hide me when the firing was heard in the farmyard. By good fortune the hussars, whom I had stationed in the convent, had learnt from a peasant that there was an Austrian detachment in the wood; they had seen us at a distance enter the farmyard, hastily marched to our aid, and we had not been taken more than two minutes before they arrived. I cannot express the pleasure with which I put myself at their head. Some of the enemy's party escaped through a back door, but we made two-and-twenty prisoners, with a lieutenant of the regiment of Kalnockichen: they had two men killed, and one wounded; and two men also of my chasseurs

were hewed down, by the saber, in the hay loft, where they were at work.

We continued our forage with more caution after this accident: the horses we had taken served, in part, to draw carts; and, after raising a contribution of one hundred and fifty ducats on the convent, which I distributed among the soldiers to engage them to silence, we returned to the army, from which we were distant about two leagues.

We heard firing as we marched; and the foragers on all sides were skirmishing with the enemy. A lieutenant and forty horse joined me; yet with this reënforcement, I durst not return to the camp, because I learnt we were in danger from more than eight hundred pandours and hussars, who were in the plain. I therefore determined to take a long, winding, but secret route; and had the good fortune to come safe to quarters, with my prisoners, and five-and-twenty loaded carts. The king was at dinner when I entered his tent. Having been absent all night, it was imagined I had been taken, that accident having happened the same day, to many others.

The instant I entered, the king demanded if I returned singly? "No, please your majesty," answered I; "I have brought five-and-twenty loads of forage, and two-and-twenty prisoners, with their officers and horses."

The king then commanded me to sit down, and turning himself toward the English ambassador, who was near him, said, laying his hand on my shoulder, *"C'est un matador de ma jeunesse."* [He is one of my young Hectors.]

A reconnoitering party was, at the same moment, in waiting before his tent; he consequently asked me few questions, and to those he did ask, I replied tremblingly. In a few minutes he rose from the table, gave a glance at the prisoners, hung the order of merit round my neck, commanded me to go and take repose, and set off with his party.

It is easy to conceive the embarrassment of my situation; my unpardonable negligence deserved that I should have been broken, instead of which I was rewarded; an instance, this, of the great influence of chance on the affairs of the world. How many generals have gained victories by their very errors, which have been afterwards attributed to their

genius! It is evident the sergeant of hussars, who retook me and my men, by bringing up his party, was much better entitled than myself to the recompense I received. On how many occasions have I since met with disgrace and punishment, when I deserved reward! My inquietude lest the truth should be discovered was extreme, especially recollecting how many people were in the secret; and my apprehensions were incessant.

As I did not want money, I gave the sergeants twenty ducats each, and the soldiers one, in order to insure their silence, which, being a favorite with them, they readily promised. I however was determined to declare the truth the very first opportunity; and this happened a few days after.

We were on our march, and I, as cornet, was at the head of my company, when the king, advancing, beckoned me to come to him, and bade me tell him exactly how the affair I had so lately been engaged in happened.

The question at first made me mistrust I was betrayed; but, remarking the king had a mildness in his manners, I presently recovered myself, and related the exact truth. I saw the astonishment of his countenance, but at the same time saw he was pleased with my sincerity. He spoke to me for half an hour, not as a king, but as a father, praised my candor, and ended with the following words, which, while life remains, I shall never forget—"Confide in the advice I give you; depend wholly upon me, and I will make you a man." Whoever can feel may imagine how infinitely my gratitude toward the king was increased by this his great goodness; from that moment I had no other desire than to live and die for his service.

IV

When we came to Berlin, in the middle of December, I was received with open arms. I became less cautious than formerly, and perhaps was more narrowly observed. A lieutenant of the foot-guards, who was a public Ganymede, and against whom I had that natural antipathy and abhorrence I have for all such wretches, having indulged himself in some very impertinent jokes on the secret of my amour, I bestowed on him the epithet he deserved. We drew our swords, and

he was wounded. On the Sunday following, I presented myself to pay my respects to his majesty on the parade, who said to me, as he passed—"The storm and the thunder shall rend your heart; beware." He added nothing more.

Some little time after, I was a few minutes too late on the parade; the king remarked it, and sent me, under arrest, to the foot-guard at Potsdam. When I had been here a fortnight, Colonel Wartensleben came, and advised me to petition for pardon. I was then too much a novice in the modes of the court to follow his counsel, nor did I even remark the person who gave it me was himself a most subtle courtier. I complained bitterly that I had so long been deprived of liberty, for a fault which was usually punished by three, or at most, six days arrest. Here, accordingly, I remained.

Eight days after, the king having come to Potsdam, I was sent by General Bourke to Berlin, to carry some letters, but without having seen the king. On my return, I presented myself to him on the parade; and as our squadron was garrisoned at Berlin, I asked—"Does it please your majesty that I should go and join my corps?"—"Whence come you?" answered he.—"From Berlin."—"And where were you before you went to Berlin?"—"Under arrest."—"Then under arrest you must remain."

I did not recover my liberty till three days before our departure for Silesia, toward which we marched, with the utmost speed, in the beginning of May, to commence our second campaign.

Here I must recount an event which happened that winter, which became the source of all my misfortunes, and to which I must entreat my readers will pay the utmost attention; since this error, if innocence can be error, was the cause that the most faithful and the best of subjects became bewildered in scenes of wretchedness, and was the victim of misery, from his nineteenth to the sixtieth year of his age, I dare presume that this true narrative, supported by testimonies the most authentic, will fully vindicate my present honor and my future memory.

Francis, baron of Trenck, was the son of my father's brother, consequently my cousin-german. I shall speak hereafter of the singular events of his life. Being a commander

of pandours in the Austrian service, and grievously wounded in Bavaria, in the year 1743, he wrote to my mother, informing her he intended me, her eldest son, for his universal legatee. This letter, to which I returned no answer, was sent to me at Potsdam. I was so satisfied with my situation, and had such numerous reasons so to be, considering the kindness with which the king treated me, that I would not have exchanged my good fortune for all the treasures of the Great Mogul.

On the 12th of February, 1744, being at Berlin, I was in company with Captain Jaschinsky, commander of the body-guard, the captain of which ranks as colonel in the army, together with lieutenant Studnitz, and cornet Wagnitz. The latter was my field-comrade, and is, at this present time, commander-general of the cavalry of Hesse-Cassel. The Austrian, Trenck, became the subject of conversation, and Jaschinsky asked if I was his kinsman; I answered yes, and immediately mentioned his having made me his universal heir. "And what answer have you returned?" said Jaschinsky. "None at all."

The whole company then observed, that, in a case like the present, I was much to blame not to answer; that the least I could do would be to thank him for his good wishes, and entreat a continuance of them. Jaschinsky further added—"Desire him to send you some of his fine Hungarian horses for your own use, and give me the letter; I will convey it to him, by means of Mr. Bossart, legation-counselor of the Saxon embassy; but on condition that you will give me one of the horses. This correspondence is a family, and not a state affair; I will make myself responsible for the consequences."

I immediately took my commander's advice, and began to write; and had those who suspected me thought proper to make the least inquiry into these circumstances, the four witnesses, who read what I wrote, could have attested my innocence, and rendered it indubitable. I gave my letter open to Jaschinsky, who sealed it, and sent it himself.

I must omit none of the incidents concerning this letter, it being the sole cause of all my sufferings. I shall therefore here relate an event, which was the first occasion of the unjust suspicions entertained against me.

One of my grooms, with two led horses, was, among many others, taken by the pandours of Trenck. When I returned to the camp, I was to accompany the king on a reconnoitering party. My horse was too tired, and I had no other; I informed him of my embarrassment, and his majesty immediately made me a present of a fine English courser.

Some days after, I was exceedingly astonished to see my groom return, with my two horses, and a pandour trumpeter, who brought me a letter, containing nearly the following words:—

"The Austrian Trenck is not at war with the Prussian Trenck, but on the contrary is happy to have recovered the horses from his hussars, and to return them to whom they first belonged," &c.

I went the same day to pay my respects to the king, who, receiving me with great coldness, said—"Since your cousin has returned you your own horses, you have no more need of mine."

There were too many who envied me to suppose these words would escape repetition. The return of the horses seemed infinitely to have increased the suspicion Frederick entertained against me, and therefore became one of the principal causes of my misfortune; it is for this reason that I dwell upon this and such like small incidents, they being necessary for my own justification, and, were it possible, for that of the king. My innocence is indeed at present universally acknowledged by the court, the army, and the whole nation, who all mention the injustice I suffered with pity, and the fortitude with which it was endured with surprise.

We marched for Silesia, to enter on our second campaign, which, to the Prussians, was as bloody and murderous as it was glorious.

We made three attacks on the cavalry, and two on the infantry. Nothing could withstand a squadron like this, which, for men, horses, courage, and experience, was assuredly the first in the world. Our corps alone took seven standards, and five pair of colors, and in less than an hour the affair was over.

I received a pistol-shot in my right hand; my horse was desperately wounded, and I was obliged to change him on

the third charge. The day after the battle, all the officers were rewarded with the order of merit. For my own part, I remained four weeks among the wounded, at Schweidnitz, where there were sixteen thousand men under the torture of the army surgeons, many of whom had not their wounds dressed till the third day.

I also performed the service of adjutant during this campaign, a circumstantial account of which no person is better enabled to write than myself, I having been present at all that passed. I was the scholar of the greatest master the art of war ever knew, and who believed me worthy to receive his instructions; but the volume I am writing would be insufficient to contain all that personally relates to myself.

I must here mention an adventure that happened at this time, and which will show the art of the great Frederick in forming youth for his service, and devotedly attaching them to his person.

I was exceedingly fond of hunting, in which, notwithstanding it was severely forbidden, I indulged myself. I one day returned laden with pheasants: but judge my astonishment and fears, when I saw the army had decamped, and that it was with difficulty I could overtake the rear-guard.

In this, my distress, I applied to an officer of hussars, who instantly lent me his horse, by the aid of which I rejoined my corps, which always marched as the vanguard. Mounting my own horse, I tremblingly rode to the head of my division, which it was my duty to precede. The king, however, had remarked my absence, or rather had been reminded of it by my superior officer, who, for some time past, had become my enemy.

Just as the army halted to encamp, the king rode toward me, and made a signal for me to approach, and reading my fears in my countenance, said, with a smile—"What, are you just returned from hunting?"—"Yes, your majesty—I hope—" Here, interrupting me, he added—"Well, well, for this time I shall take no further notice—remember Potsdam; but, however, let me find you more attentive to your duty."

So ended this affair, for which I deserved to have been broken. But I must remind my readers that the king meant,

by the words, *"remember Potsdam,"* that I had been punished too severely the winter before, and that my present pardon was intended as a compensation.

This was indeed to think and act greatly; this was indeed the true art of forming great men; an art much more effectual than that of ferocious generals, who threaten subalterns with imprisonment and chains on every slight occasion; and, while indulging all the rigors of military law, make no distinction of minds or of men. Frederick, on the contrary, sometimes pardoned the failings of genius, while mechanic souls he mechanically punished, according to the very letter of the laws of war.

Opposite the defile through which the enemy was to march to the attack, eight field-pieces were concealed behind the hill. The king must necessarily have been informed of the whole plan of the Austrian general, for he had called in the advanced post from the heights, that he might lull him into security, and make him imagine we should be surprised in the midst of sleep.

Scarcely did break of day appear, before the Austrian artillery, situated upon the heights, began to play upon our camp, and their cavalry to march, through the defile, to the attack.

As suddenly we were into battle array; for in less than ten minutes we ourselves began the attack, notwithstanding the smallness of our number, the whole army only containing five regiments of cavalry. We fell with fury upon the enemy (who at this time were wholly employed in forming their men at the mouth of the defile, and that slowly, little expecting so sudden and violent a charge), that we drove them back into the defile, where they pressed upon each other in crowds: the king himself stood ready to unmask his eight field-pieces, and a dreadful and bloody slaughter ensued in this narrow place, from which the enemy had not the power to retreat. This single incident gained the battle, and deceived all the hopes of Prince Charles.

Nadasti, Trenck, and the light troops sent to attack our rear, were employed in pillaging the camp. The ferocious Croats met no opposition, while this their error made our victory more secure. It deserves to be noticed that, when

advice was brought to the king that the enemy had fallen upon and were plundering the camp, his answer was—"So much the better: they have found themselves employment, and will be no impediment to our main design."

Our victory was complete, but all our baggage was lost; the headquarters, utterly undefended, were totally stripped; and Trenck had, for his part of the booty, the king's tent, and his service of plate.

I have mentioned this circumstance here, because that, in the year 1746, my cousin Trenck, having fallen into the power of his enemies, who had instituted a legal process against him, was accused, by some vallainous wretches, of having surprised the king in bed at the battle of Sorau, and of having afterwards released him for a bribe.

What was still worse, they hired a common prostitute, a native of Brunn, who pretended she was the daughter of a Marshal Schwerin, to give in evidence that she herself was in bed with the king when Trenck entered his tent, whom he immediately made prisoner, and as immediately released.

To this part of the prosecution I myself, an eye-witness, can answer; the thing was false and impossible. He was informed of the intended attack. I accompanied the watchful king from midnight till four in the morning, which time he employed in riding through the camp, and making the necessary preparations to receive the enemy; and the action began at five. Trenck could not take the king in bed, for the battle was almost gained when he and his pandours entered the camp, and plundered the headquarters.

A few days after the battle of Sorau, the usual camp postman brought me a letter from my cousin Trenck, the colonel of pandours, antedated at Essek four months, of which the following is a copy:—

"Your letter, of the twelfth of February, from Berlin, informs me you desire to have some Hungarian horses. On these you would come and attack me and my pandours. I saw with pleasure during the last campaign, that the Prussian Trenck was a good soldier; and that I might give you some proofs of my attachment, I then returned the horses which my men had taken. If, however, you wish to have Hungarian horses, you must take mine, in like manner, from me, in the

field of battle; or, should you so think fit, come and join one who will receive you with open arms, like his friend and son, and who will procure you every advantage you can desire."

At first I was terrified at reading this letter, yet could not help smiling. Cornet Wagenitz, now general in chief of the Hesse-Cassel forces, and Lieutenant Grotthausen, both now alive, and then present, were my camp comrades. I gave them the letter to read, and they laughed at its contents. It was determined to show it to our superior officer, Jaschinsky, on a promise of secrecy; and it was accordingly shown him within an hour after it was received.

The reader will be so kind as to recollect that, as I have before said, it was this Colonel Jaschinsky who, on the 12th of February, the same year, at Berlin, prevailed on me to write to the Austrian Trenck, my cousin; that he received the letter open, and undertook to send it according to its address; also, that in his letter I had, in jest, asked him to send me some Hungarian horses, and, should they come, had promised one to Jaschinsky. He read the letter with an air of surprise; we laughed, and, it being whispered through the army that, in consequence of our late victory, detached corps would be sent into Hungary, Jaschinsky said—"We shall now go and take Hungarian horses for ourselves." Here the conversation ended, and I, little suspecting future consequences, returned to my tent.

I must here make the following observations:—

1st. I had not observed the date of the letter brought by the postman, which, as I have said, was antedated four months; this, however, the colonel did not fail to remark.

2dly. The probability is, that this was a net spread for me by this false and wicked man. The return of my horses, during the preceding campaign, had been the subject of much conversation. It is possible he had the king's orders to watch me; but more probably he only prevailed on me to write that he might entrap me by a fictitious answer. Certain it is, my cousin Trenck, at Vienna, affirmed to his death he never received any letter from me, consequently never could send any answer. I must therefore conclude this letter was forged.

Jaschinsky was at this time one of the king's favorites: his spy over the army: a tale-bearer: an inventor of lies and

wicked calumnies. Some years after the event of which I am now speaking, the king was obliged to break, and banish him from the country.

He was then also the paramour of the beauteous Madame Brossart, wife of the Saxon resident at Berlin; and there can be little doubt but that this false letter was, by her means, conveyed to some Saxon or Austrian post-office, and thence, according to its address, sent to me. He had daily opportunities of infusing suspicions into the king's mind concerning me, and, unknown to me, of pursuing his diabolical plan.

I must likewise add, he was four hundred ducats indebted to me. At that time I had always a plentiful supply of money. This booty became his own, when I, unexamined, was arrested, and thrown into prison. In like manner he seized on the greatest part of my camp equipage.

God only knows what were the means he took to excite the king's suspicions; for it is incredible that Frederick, considering his well-known professions of public justice, should treat me in the manner he did, without a hearing, without examination, and without a court-martial. This to me has ever remained a mystery, which the king alone was able to explain; he afterwards was convinced I was innocent; but my sufferings had been too cruel, and the miseries he had inflicted too horrible, for me ever to hope compensation.

In an affair of this nature, which will soon be known to all Europe, as it long has been in Prussia, the weakest is always guilty. I have been made a terrible example, to this our age, how true that maxim is in despotic states.

A man of my rank, having once unjustly suffered, and having the power of making his sufferings known, must either be highly rewarded, or still more unjustly punished. My name and injuries will ever stain the annals of Frederick *the Great;* even those who read this book will perhaps suppose that I, from political motives of hope or fear, have sometimes concealed truth, by endeavoring to palliate his conduct.

It must ever remain incomprehensible, that a monarch so clear-sighted, himself the daily witness of my demeanor, one well acquainted with mankind, and conscious I wanted neither money, honor, nor hope of future preferment—I say, it is

incomprehensible that he should really suppose me guilty. I take God to witness, and all those who knew me in prosperity and misfortune, I never harbored a thought of betraying my country. How was it possible to suspect me? I was neither madman nor idiot. In my eighteenth year I was a cornet of the body-guard, adjutant to the king, and possessed his favor and confidence in the highest degree. His presents to me, in one year, amounted to fifteen hundred dollars. I kept seven horses, four men in livery; I was valued, distinguished, and beloved by the mistress of my soul. My relations held high offices, both civil and military; I was even fanatically devoted to my king and country, and had nothing to wish.

That I should become thus wretched, in consequence of this unfortunate letter, is equally wonderful; it came by the public post. Had there been any criminal correspondence, my kinsman certainly would not have chosen this mode of conveyance, since, it is well known, all such letters are opened; nor could I act more openly. My colonel read the letter I wrote, and also that which I received, immediately after it was brought.

The day after the receipt of the letter I was, as I have before said, unheard, unaccused, unjudged, conducted, like a criminal, from the army, by fifty hussars, and imprisoned in the fortress of Glatz. I was allowed to take three horses, and my servants, but my whole equipage was left behind, which I never saw more, and which became the booty of Jaschinsky. My commission was given to Cornet Schatzel, and I cashiered, without knowing why. There were no legal inquiries made; all was done by the king's command.

Unhappy people! where power is superior to law, and where the innocent and the virtuous meet punishment instead of reward. Unhappy land! where the omnipotent, *Such is our will,* supersedes all legal sentence, and robs the subject of property, life, and honor.

I once more repeat, I was brought to the citadel of Glatz. I was not, however, thrown into a dungeon, but imprisoned in a chamber of the officer of the guard; was allowed my servants to wait on me, and permitted to walk on the ramparts.

I did not want money, and there was only a detachment,

from the garrison regiment, in the citadel of Glatz, the officers of which were all poor. I soon had both friends and freedom, and the rich prisoner every day kept open table.

He only who had known me in this the ardor of my youth, who had witnessed how high I aspired, and the fortune that attended me at Berlin, can imagine what my feelings were, at finding myself thus suddenly cast from my high hopes.

I wrote submissively to the king requesting to be tried by a court-martial, and not desiring any favor, should I be found guilty. This haughty tone, in a youth, was displeasing, and I received no answer, which threw me into despair, and induced me to use every possible means to obtain my liberty.

My first care was to establish, by the intervention of an officer, a certain correspondence with the object of my heart. She answered, she was far from supposing I had ever entertained the least thought traitorous to my country; that she knew, too well, I was perfectly incapable of dissimulation. She blamed the precipitate anger, and unjust suspicions of the king; promised me speedy aid, and sent me a thousand ducats.

Had I, at this critical moment, possessed a prudent and intelligent friend, who could have calmed my impatience, nothing perhaps might have been more easy than to have obtained pardon of the king, by proving my innocence; or, it may be, than to have induced him to punish my enemies.

But the officers who were then at Glatz fed the flame of discontent. They supposed the money I so freely distributed came all from Hungary, furnished by the pandour chest; and advised me not to suffer my freedom to depend upon the will of the king, but to enjoy it in his despite.

It was not more easy to give this advice than to persuade a man to take it, who, till then, had never encountered any thing but good fortune, and who consequently supported this reverse with impatience. I was not yet however determined, because I could not yet resolve to abandon my country, and especially Berlin.

V

Five months soon passed away in prison! Peace was concluded; the king was returned to his capital; my commission

in the guards was bestowed on another, when Lieutenant Piaschky, of the regiment of Fouquet, and Ensign Reitz, who often mounted guard over me, proposed that they and I should escape together. I yielded, our plan was fixed, and every preparatory step taken.

At that time there was another prisoner at Glatz, whose name was Manget, by birth a Swiss, and captain of cavalry in the Natzmerschen hussars: he had been condemned by a court-martial to ten years' imprisonment, with allowance of only four rix-dollars per month.

Having done this man kindness, I resolved to rescue him from bondage, at the same time that I obtained freedom for myself. I communicated my design, and made the proposal, which was accepted by him, and measures were taken; yet we were betrayed by this vile man, who thus purchased pardon and liberty.

Piaschky, who had been informed that Reitz was arrested, saved himself by deserting. I denied the fact in presence of Manget, with whom I was confronted, and bribed the auditor with a hundred ducats. By this means Reitz only suffered a year's imprisonment, and the loss of his commission. I was afterwards closely confined in a chamber, for having endeavored to corrupt the king's officers, and was guarded with greater caution.

Here I will interrupt my narrative, for a moment, to relate an adventure which happened between me and this Captain Manget, three years after he had thus betrayed me, that is to say, in 1749, at Warsaw.

I there met him by chance, and it is not difficult to imagine what was the salutation he received. I caned him; he took this ill, and challenged me to fight with pistols. Captain Heuckin, of the Polish guards, was my second. We both fired together: I shot him through the neck at the first shot, and he fell dead on the field.

He, alone, of all my enemies, ever died by my own hand; and he well merited his end, for his cowardly treachery toward the two brave fellows of whom I have spoken; and still more so with respect to myself, who had been his benefactor. I own, I have never reproached myself for this duel, by which I sent a rascal out of the world.

I return to my tale. My destiny at Glatz was now become more untoward and severe. The king's suspicions were increased, as likewise was his anger, by this my late attempt to escape.

Left to myself, I considered my situation in the worst point of view, and determined either on flight or death. The length and closeness of my confinement became insupportable to my impatient temper.

I had always had the garrison on my side, nor was it possible to prevent my making friends among them. They knew I had money, and, in a poor garrison regiment, the officers of which are all dissatisfied, having most of them been draughted from other corps and sent thither as a punishment, there was nothing that might not be undertaken.

My scheme was as follows:

My window looked toward the city, and was ninety feet from the ground in the tower of the citadel, out of which I could not get, without having found a place of refuge in the city.

This an officer undertook to procure for me, and prevailed on an honest soap-boiler to grant me a hiding-place. I then notched my penknife, and sawed through three large iron bars; but this mode was too tedious, it being necessary to file away eight bars from my window, before I could pass through; another officer therefore procured me a file, which I was obliged to use with caution, lest I should be overheard by the sentinels.

Having ended this labor, I cut my leather portmanteau into thongs, sewed them end to end, added the sheets of my bed, and descended safely from this astonishing height.

It rained, the night was dark, and all seemed fortunate; but I had to wade through moats full of mud, before I could enter the city, a circumstance I had never once considered. I sunk up to the knees, and, after long struggling, and incredible efforts to extricate myself, I was obliged to call the sentinel, and desire him to go and tell the governor, that Trenck was stuck fast in the moat.

My misfortune was the greater on this occasion, because that general, Fouquet, was then governor of Glatz. He was one of the cruellest of men. He had been wounded by my father

in a duel; and the Austrian Trenck had taken his baggage in 1774, and had also laid the country of Glatz under contribution. He was therefore an enemy to the very name of Trenck; nor did he lose any opportunity of giving me proofs of his enmity, and especially on the present occasion, when he left me standing in the mire till noon, the sport of the soldiers. I was then drawn out, half dead, only again to be imprisoned, and shut up the whole day, without water to wash me. No one can imagine how I looked, exhausted and dirty, my long hair having fallen into the mud, with which, by my struggling, it was loaded. I remained in this condition till the next day, when two fellow-prisoners were sent to assist and clean me.

My imprisonment now became more intolerable. I had still eighty louis-d'ors in my purse, which had not been taken from me at my removal into another dungeon, and these afterwards did me good service.

The passions soon all assailed me at once, and impetuous, boiling, youthful blood, overpowered reason; hope disappeared; I thought myself the most unfortunate of men, and my king an irreconcilable judge, more wrathful and more fortified in suspicion by my own rashness. My nights were sleepless, my days miserable; my soul was tortured by the desire of fame; a consciousness of innocence was a continued stimulus, inciting me to end my misfortunes. Youth, inexperienced in woe and disastrous feats, beholds every evil magnified, desponds on every new disappointment, more especially after having failed in attempting freedom. Education had taught me to despise death, and these opinions had been confirmed by my friend La Metrie, author of the famous work, *L'Homme machine,* or Man a Machine.

I read much during my confinement at Glatz, where books were allowed me; time was therefore less tedious; but when the love of liberty awoke, when fame and affection called me to Berlin, and my balked hopes painted the wretchedness of my situation; when I remembered that my country, judging by appearances, could not but pronounce me a traitor; then was I hourly impelled to rush on the naked bayonets of my guards, by whom, to me, the road of freedom was barred.

Big with such-like thoughts, eight days had not elapsed, since my last fruitless attempt to escape, when an event hap-

pened which would appear incredible, were I, the principal actor in the scene, not alive to attest its truth, and might not all Glatz, and the Prussian garrison, be produced as eye and ear-witnesses. This accident will prove that adventurous, and even rash daring will render the most improbable undertakings possible, and that desperate attempts may often make a general more fortunate and famous, than the wisest and best concerted plans.

Major Doo came to visit me, accompanied by an officer of the guard, and an adjutant. After examining every corner of the chamber, he addressed me, taxing me with a second crime in endeavoring to obtain my liberty; adding, this must certainly increase the anger of the king.

My blood boiled at the word crime; he talked of patience; I asked him how long the king had condemned me to imprisonmen? He answered—"A traitor to his country, who has corresponded with the enemy, cannot be condemned for a certain time; but must depend entirely for grace and pardon on the king."

At that instant, I snatched his sword from his side on which my eyes had some time been fixed, sprang out of the door, tumbled the sentinel from the top to the bottom of the stairs, passed the men who happened to be drawn up before the prison-door to relieve guard, attacked them, sword in hand, threw them suddenly into surprise by the manner in which I laid about me, wounded four of them, made through the rest, sprang over the breastwork of the ramparts, and, with my sword drawn in my hand, immediately leaped this astonishing height, without receiving the least injury. I leaped the second wall with equal safety and good fortune. None of their pieces were loaded; no one durst leap after me, and, in order to pursue, they must go round, through the town and the gate of the citadel; so that I had the start full half an hour.

A sentinel, however, in a narrow passage, endeavored to oppose my flight, but I parried his fixed bayonet, and wounded him in the face. A second sentinel, meantime, ran from the outworks, to seize me behind, and I, to avoid him, made a spring at the palisades; there I was unluckily caught by the foot, and received a bayonet wound in the upper lip; thus entangled, they beat me with the butt-ends of their muskets,

and dragged me back to prison, while I struggled and defended myself like a man grown desperate.

Certain it is, had I more carefully jumped the palisades, and dispatched the sentinel who opposed me, I might have escaped, and gained the mountains. Thus might I have fled to Bohemia, after having, at noon-day, broken from the fortress of Glatz, sprung past all its sentinels, over all its walls, and passed with impunity, in despite of the guard, who were under arms, ready to oppose me. I should not, having a sword, have feared any single opponent, and was able to contend with the swiftest runners.

That good fortune which had so far attended me, forsook me at the palisades, where hope was at an end. The severities of imprisonment were increased; two sentinels and an under-officer were locked in with me, and were themselves guarded by sentinels without. I was beaten and wounded by the butt-ends of their muskets, my right foot was sprained, I spit blood, and my wounds were not cured in less than a month.

I was now first informed the king had only condemned me to a year's imprisonment, in order to learn whether his suspicions were well founded. My mother had petitioned for me, and was answered—"Your son must remain a year imprisoned, as a punishment for his rash correspondence."

Of this I was ignorant, and it was reported in Glatz, that my imprisonment was for life. I had only three weeks longer to repine for the loss of liberty, when I made this rash attempt. What must the king think? Was he not obliged to act with this severity? How could prudence excuse my impatience, thus to risk a confiscation, when I was certain of receiving freedom, justification, and honor, in three weeks? But, such was my adverse fate, circumstances all tended to injure and persecute me, till at length I gave reason to suppose I was a traitor, notwithstanding the purity of my intentions.

Once more, then, was I in a dungeon; and no sooner was I there than I formed new projects of flight.

A lieutenant whose name was Bach, a Dane by nation, mounted guard every fourth day, and was the terror of the whole garrison; for, being a perfect master of arms, he was incessantly involved in quarrels, and generally left his marks behind him. He had served in two regiments, neither of which

would associate with him for this reason, and he had been sent to the garrison regiment at Glatz as a punishment. Bach, one day sitting beside me, related how the evening before he had wounded a lieutenant, of the name of Schell, in the arm. I replied, laughing—"Had I my liberty, I believe you would find some trouble in wounding me, for I have some skill in the sword." The blood instantly flew in his face; we split off a kind of a pair of foils from an old door, which had served me as a table, and at the first lunge I hit him on the breast.

His rage became ungovernable, and he left the prison. What was my astonishment when, a moment after, I saw him return with two soldiers' swords, which he had concealed under his coat—"Now then, boaster, prove," said he, giving me one of them, "what thou art able to do!" I endeavored to pacify him, by representing the danger, but ineffectually. He attacked me with the utmost fury, and I wounded him in the arm.

Throwing his sword down, he fell upon my neck, kissed me, and wept. At length, after some convulsive emotions of pleasure, he said—"Friend, thou art my master: and thou must, thou shalt, by my aid, obtain thy liberty, as certainly as my name is Bach." We bound up his arm as well as we could. He left me, and secretly went to a surgeon, to have it properly dressed, and at night returned.

He now remarked that it was humanly impossible I should escape, unless the officer on guard should desert with me; that he wished nothing more ardently than to sacrifice his life in my behalf, but that he could not resolve so far to forget his honor and duty as to desert himself while on guard; he notwithstanding gave me his word of honor he would find me such a person in a few days, and that, in the meantime, he would prepare everything for my flight.

He returned the same evening, bringing with him Lieutenant Schell, and, as he entered, said—"Here is your man." Schell embraced me, gave his word of honor, and thus was the affair settled, and, as it proved, my liberty ascertained.

VI

SCHELL'S talents were of a superior order; he spoke and wrote six languages, and was well acquainted with all the fine arts.

He had served in the regiment of Fouquet, had been injured by his colonel, who was a Pomeranian; and Fouquet, who was no friend to well-informed officers, had sent him to a garrison regiment. He had twice demanded his dismission, but the king sent him then to this species of imprisonment; he then determined to avenge himself by deserting, and was ready to aid me in recovering my freedom, that he might by that means spite Fouquet.

The governor meantime had been informed how familiar I was become with the officers; at which, taking offense, he sent orders that my door should no more be opened, but that I should receive my food through a small window that had been made for that purpose. The care of the prison was committed to the major, and he was forbidden to eat with me, under pain of being broken.

His precautions were ineffectual: the officers procured a false key, and remained with me half the day and night.

Captain Damnitz was imprisoned in an apartment by the side of mine. This man had deserted from the Prussian service, with the money belonging to his company, to Austria, where he obtained a commission in his cousin's regiment, who having prevailed on him to serve as a spy during the campaign of 1744, he was taken in the Prussian territories, known, and condemned to be hanged.

Some Swedish volunteers, who were then in the army, interested themselves in his behalf, and his sentence was changed to perpetual imprisonment, with a sentence of infamy.

This wretch, who, two years after, by the aid of his protectors, not only obtained his liberty, but a lieutenant-colonel's commission, was the secret spy of the major over the prisoners; and he remarked that, notwithstanding the express prohibition laid on the officers, they still passed the greater part of their time in my company.

The 24th of December came, and Schell mounted guard. He entered my prison immediately, where he continued a long time; and we made our arrangements for flight when he next should mount guard.

Lieutenant Schroeder that day dined with the governor, and heard orders given to the adjutant that Schell should be taken from the guard, and put under arrest.

Schroeder, who was in the secret, had no doubt but that we were betrayed, not knowing that the spy Damnitz had informed the governor that Schell was then in my chamber.

Schroeder, full of terror, came running to the citadel, and said to Schell—"Save thyself, friend; all is discovered, and thou wilt instantly be put under arrest."

Schell might have easily provided for his own safety, by flying singly, Schroeder having prepared horses, on one of which he himself offered to accompany him into Bohemia.

How did this worthy man, in a moment so dangerous, act toward his friend?

Running suddenly into my prison, he drew a corporal's saber from under his coat, saying—"Friend, we are betrayed; follow me, only do not suffer me to fall alive into the hands of my enemies."

I would have spoken; but interrupting me, and taking me by the hand, he added—"Follow me—we have not a moment to lose." I therefore slipped on my coat and boots, without having time to take the little money I had left; and, as he went out of the prison, Schell said to the sentinel—"I am taking the prisoner into the officer's apartment; stand where you are."

Into this room we really went, but passed out at the other door. The design of Schell was to go under the arsenal, which was not far off, to gain the covered way, leap the palisades, and afterward escape the best manner we might. We had scarcely gone a hundred paces before we met the adjutant and Major Quaadt.

Schell started back, sprang upon the rampart, and leaped the wall, which was there not very high. I followed, and alighted unhurt, except having grazed my shoulder. My poor friend was not so fortunate, having put out his ankle. He immediately drew his sword, presented it to me, and begged me to dispatch him, and fly. He was a small, weak man; but, far from complying with his request, I took him in my arms, threw him over the palisades, afterwards got him on my back, and began to run, without very well knowing which way I went.

It may not be unnecessary to remark those fortunate circumstances that favored our enterprise.

The sun had just set as we took to flight: the hoar-frost fell. No one would run the risk that we had done, by making so dangerous a leap. We heard a terrible noise behind us. Everybody knew us; but before they could go round the citadel, and through the town, in order to pursue us, we got a full half league.

The alarm guns were fired before we were a hundred paces distant; at which my friend was very much terrified, knowing that, in such cases, it was generally impossible to escape from Glatz, unless the fugitives had got the start full two hours before the alarm guns were heard, the passes being immediately all stopped by the peasants and hussars, who are exceedingly vigilant. No sooner is a prisoner missed, than the gunner runs from the guard-house and fires the cannon on the three sides of the fortress, which are kept loaded day and night for that purpose.

We were not five hundred paces from the walls when all, before us and behind us, were in motion. It was daylight when we leaped, yet was our attempt as fortunate as it was wonderful. This I attribute to my presence of mind, and the reputation I had already acquired, which made it thought a service of danger for two or three men to attack me.

It was, beside, imagined we were well provided with arms for our defense; and it was little suspected that Schell had only his sword, and I an old corporal's saber.

Among the officers commanded to pursue us was Lieutenant Bart, my intimate friend. Captain Zerbst, of the regiment of Fouquet, who had always testified the kindness of a brother toward me, met us on the Bohemian frontiers, and called to me—"Make to the left, brother, and you will see some lone houses, which are on the Bohemian confines: the hussars have rode straight forward." He then passed on, as if he had not seen us.

We had nothing to fear from the officers; for the intimacy between the Prussian officers was at that time so great, and the word of honor so sacred, that during my rigorous detention at Glatz, I had been once six and thirty hours hunting at Neurode, at the seat of Baron Stillfriede. Lunitz had taken my place in the prison, which the major knew when he came to make his visit. Hence may be conjectured how great was

the confidence in which the word of the unfortunate Trenck was held at Glatz, since they did not fear letting him leave his dungeon, and hunt on the very confines of Bohemia. This too, shows the governor was deceived, in despite of his watchfulness and orders, and that a man of honor, with money, and good head and heart, will never want friends.

These, my memoirs, will be a picture of what the national character then was; and will prove that, with officers who lived like brothers, and held their words so sacred, the Great Frederick well might vanquish his enemies.

I cut a stick to assist Schell in hopping forward as well as he could, when I was tired of carrying him; and thus we continued our route, the difficulties of which were increased by the mountain-snows.

Thus passed the night; during which, up to the middle in snow, we made but little way. There were no paths to be traced in the mountains, and they were in many places impassable. Day at length appeared—we thought ourselves near the frontiers, which are twenty English miles from Glatz, when we suddenly, to our great terror, heard the city clock strike.

Overwhelmed as we were by hunger, cold, fatigue and pain, it was impossible we should hold out through the day. After some consideration and another half-hour's labor, we came to a village at the foot of the mountain, on the side of which, about three hundred paces from us, we perceived two separate houses, which inspired us with a stratagem that was successful.

We lost our hats in leaping the ramparts; but Schell had preserved his scarf and gorget, which would give him authority among the peasants.

I then cut my finger, rubbed the blood over my face, my shirt, and my coat, and bound up my head, to give myself the appearance of a man dangerously wounded.

In this condition I carried Schell to the end of the wood, not far from these houses; here he tied my hands behind my back, but so that I could easily disengage them in case of need, and hobbled after me, by aid of his staff, calling for help.

Two old peasants appeared, and Schell commanded them

to run to the village, and tell the magistrate to come immediately with a cart. "I have seized this knave," added he, "who has killed my horse, and in the struggle I have put out my ankle: however, I have wounded and bound him—fly quickly, bring a cart, lest he should die before he is hanged."

As for me, I suffered myself to be led, as if half dead, into the house. A peasant was dispatched to the village. An old woman and a pretty girl seemed to take great pity on me, and gave me some bread and milk: but how great was our astonishment when the aged peasant called Schell by his name, and told him he well knew we were deserters, having the night before been at a neighboring alehouse, where the officer in pursuit of us came, named and described us, and related the whole history of our flight. The peasant knew Schell, because of his son having served in his company, and had often spoken of him when he was quartered at Habelschwert.

Presence of mind and resolution were all that were now left. I instantly ran to the stable, while Schell detained the peasant in the chamber: he, however, was a worthy man, and directed him the road toward Bohemia.

He who has been in the same situation only can imagine, though he never can describe, all the joy we felt. An innocent man, languishing in a dungeon, who, by his own endeavors, has broken his chains, regained his liberty, in despite of all the arbitrary power of princes, who vainly would oppose him, conceives, in moments like these, such an abhorrence of despotism, that I could not well comprehend how I ever could resolve to live under governments where wealth, content, honor, liberty, and life, all depend upon a master's will, and who, were his intentions the most pure, could not be able, singly, to do justice to a whole nation.

Never did I, during life, feel pleasure more exquisite than at this moment. My friend for me had risked a shameful death, and now, after having carried him at least twelve hours on my shoulders, I had saved both him and myself. We certainly should not have suffered any man to bring us alive back again to Glatz. Yet this was but the first act of the tragedy of which I was doomed the hero, and the mournful incidents of which all arose out of, and depended on, each other.

Could I have read the book of fate, and have seen the forty years fearful afflictions that were to follow, I certainly should not have rejoiced at this my escape from Glatz. One year's patience might have appeased the irritated monarch; and, taking a retrospect of all that has passed, I now find it would have been a fortunate circumstance had the good and faithful Schell and I never met, since he also fell into a train of misfortunes, which I shall hereafter relate, and from which he could never extricate himself but by death. The sufferings which I have since undergone will be read with astonishment.

It is my consolation that both the laws of honor and nature justify the action. It may serve as an example of the fortitude with which danger ought to be encountered, and show monarchs that in Germany, as well as Rome, there are men who refuse to crouch beneath the yoke of despotism, and that philosophy and resolution are stronger than even those lords of slaves, with all their threats, whips, tortures, and instruments of death.

In Prussia, where my sufferings might have made me supposed the worst of traitors, is my innocence universally acknowledged; and instead of contempt, there have I gained the love of the whole nation, which is the best compensation for all the ills I have suffered, and for having preserved the virtuous principles taught me in my youth, persecuted, as I have been, by envy and malicious power. I have not time further to moralize; the numerous incidents of my life would otherwise swell these volumes to too great an extent.

Thus, in freedom at Braunau, on the Bohemian frontiers, I sent the horses, with the corporal's sword, back to General Fouquet, at Glatz. The letter accompanying them was so pleasing to him, that all the sentinels before my prison door, as well as the guard under arms, and all those we passed, were obliged to run the gauntlet, although, the very day before, he had himself declared my escape was now rendered impossible. He, however, was deceived; and thus do the mean revenge themselves on the miserable, and the tyrant on the innocent.

I wrote to the king, and sent him a true state of my case; sent indubitable proofs of my innocence, and supplicated justice, but received no answer.

In this the monarch may be justified, at least in my apprehension. A wicked man had maliciously and falsely accused me; Colonel Jaschinsky had made him suspect me for a traitor, and it was impossible he should read my heart. The first act of injustice had been hastily committed; I had been condemned unheard, unjudged, and the injustice that had been done me was known too late; Frederick *the Great* found he was not infallible. Pardon I would not ask, for I had committed no offense; and the king would not probably own, by a reverse of conduct, he had been guilty of injustice. My resolution increased his obstinacy; but in the discussion of the cause, our power was very unequal.

The monarch once really loved me; he meant my punishment should only be temporary, and as a trial of my fidelity. That I had been condemned to no more than a year's imprisonment had never been told me, and was a fact I did not learn till long after.

Though a circumstantial description of our travels would alone fill a volume, I shall only relate the most singular accidents which happened to us.

This may be called the first scene in which I appeared as an adventurer; and perhaps my good fortune may even have overbalanced the bad, since I have escaped death full thirty times, when the chances were at least a hundred to one against me; certain it is, I undertook many things in which I seemed to have owed my preservation to the very rashness of the action, in which others, equally brave, would have found death.

VII

We took the road to Parsemechi. We had not been an hour on the road before we saw a carriage; as we drew near, we knew it to be that of our enemies, who pretended it was set in the snow. They were round it, and, when they saw us approach, began to call for help. This, we guessed, was an artifice to entrap us. Schell was not strong; they would all have fallen upon me, and we should easily have been carried off; for they wanted to take us alive.

We left the causeway about thirty paces, answering—"We had not time to give them help;" at which they all ran to their

carriage, drew out their pistols, and returning full speed after us, called—"Stop, rascals!" We began to run; but I, suddenly turning round, presented my piece, and shot the nearest dead on the spot. Schell fired his pistols; our opposers did the same, and Schell received a ball in the neck at this discharge. It was now my turn: I took out my pistols; one of the assailants fled, and I, enraged, pursued him three hundred paces, overtook him, and, as he was defending himself with his sword, perceiving he bled and made a feeble resistance, pressed upon him, and gave him a stroke that brought him down. I instantly returned to Schell, whom I found in the power of two others, that were dragging him towards the carriage; but when they saw me at their heels, they fled over the fields. The coachman, perceiving which way the battle went, leaped on his box, and drove off at full speed.

Schell, though delivered, was wounded with a ball in the neck, and by a cut in the right hand, which had made him drop his sword; though he affirmed he had run one of his adversaries through.

I took a silver watch from the man I had killed, and was going to make free with his purse, when Schell called, and showed me a coach and six coming down the hill. To stay would have exposed us to have been imprisoned as highwaymen: for the two fugitives, who had escaped us, would certainly have borne witness against us. Safety only could be found in flight. I, however, seized the musket and hat of him I had first killed, and we then gained the copse, and after that the forest. The road was round about, and it was night before we reached Parsemechi.

Here we arrived wholly destitute of money. I sold my coat to a Jew, who gave me four florins and a coarse wagoner's frock in exchange, which I did not think I should long need, as we now drew nearer to where my sister lived, and where I hoped I should be better equipped. Schell, however, grew weaker and weaker; his wounds healed slowly, and were expensive; the cold also was injurious to him; and, as he was not by nature cleanly in his person, his body soon became the harbor of every species of vermin to be picked up in Poland. We often arrived wet and weary to our smoky, reeking stoveroom; often we were obliged to lie on straw, or the bare

boards; and the various hardships we suffered are almost incredible. Wandering, as we did, in the midst of winter, through Poland, where humanity, hospitality, and gentle pity, are scarcely so much as known by name; where merciless Jews deny the poor traveler a bed, and where we, disconsolately, strayed without bread, and almost naked; these were sufferings, the full extent of which he only can conceive by whom they have been felt. My musket now and then procured us an occasional meal of tame geese, and cocks and hens, when these were to be had; otherwise we never took or touched anything that was not our own. We met with Saxon and Prussian recruiters at various places, all of whom, on account of my youth and stature, were eager to inveigle me. I was highly diverted to hear them enumerate all the possibilities of future greatness, and how liable I was hereafter to become a corporal: nor was I less merry with their mead, ale, and brandy, given with an intent to make me drunk. Thus had we many artifices to guard against; but thus had we, likewise, very luckily for us, many a good meal gratis.

VIII

THERE was a fair held at Thorn on the day of our arrival. Suspicion might well arise among the crowd, on seeing a strong, tall young man, wretchedly clothed, with a large saber by his side, and a pair of pistols in his girdle, accompanied by another as poorly appareled as himself, with his hand and neck bound up, and armed likewise with pistols; so that altogether he more resembled a specter than a man.

We went to an inn, but were refused entertainment: I then asked for the Jesuits' college, where I inquired for the father-rector. They supposed at first I was a thief come to seek an asylum. After long waiting, and much entreaty, his Jesuitical highness at length made his appearance, and received me as the Grand Mogul would his slaves. My case certainly was pitiable: I related all the events of my life, and the purport of my journey; conjured him to save Schell, who was unable to proceed further, and whose wounds grew daily worse; and prayed him to entertain him at the convent till I should have been to my mother, have obtained money, and returned to Thorn, when I would certainly repay him whatever

expense he might have been at, with thanks and gratitude.

Never shall I forget the haughty insolence of this priest. Scarcely would he listen to my humble request; thou-ed and interrupted me continually, to tell me, "Be brief; I have more pressing affairs than thine." In fine, I was turned away without obtaining the least assistance; and here I was first taught Jesuitical pride. God help the poor and honest man who needs the assistance of Jesuits! They, like all other monks, are seared to every sentiment of human pity, and commiserate the distressed by taunts and irony.

Four times in my life I have sought assistance and advice from convents, and am convinced it is the duty of every honest man to aid in erasing them from the face of the earth.

They succor rascals and murderers, that their power may be idolized by the ignorant, and ostentatiously exert itself to impede the course of law and justice; but in vain do the poor and needy virtuous apply to them for help.

As we went, I reflected that, on the road to Elbing, we must pass through several Prussian villages, and inquired for a shop where we might purchase a map. We were directed to an old woman, who sat at a door, across the way, and were told that she had a good assortment, for that her son was a scholar. I addressed myself to her, and my question pleased her, I having added we were unfortunate travelers, who wished to find, by the map, the road to Russia.

She showed us into a chamber, laid an atlas on the table, and placed herself opposite me, while I examined the map, and endeavored to hide a bit of a ragged ruffle, that had made its appearance. After steadfastly looking at me, she at length exclaimed, with a sad and mournful tone—"Good God! who knows what is now become of my poor son? I can see, sir, you too are of a good family. My son would go and seek his fortune, and for these eight years have I had no tidings of him. He must now be in the Austrian cavalry." I asked in what regiment—"The regiment of Hohenhem; you are his very picture."—"Is he not my height?"—"Yes, nearly."—"Has he not light hair?"—"Yes, like yours, sir."—"What is his name?"—"His name is William."—"No, my dear mother," cried I, "William is not dead; he was my best friend when I was with my regiment."—Here the poor woman could

not contain herself with joy. She threw herself round my neck, called me her good angel, who brought her happy tidings, asked me a thousand questions, which I easily contrived to make her answer herself: and thus, forced by imperious necessity, bereft of all other means, did I act the deceiver.

The story I made was nearly as follows: I told her I was a soldier in the regiment of Hohenhem, that I had a furlough to go and see my father, and that I should return in a month, would then take her letters, and undertake that, if she wished it, her son should purchase his discharge, and once more come and live with his mother. I added, that I should be forever, and infinitely obliged to her, if she would suffer my comrade, meantime, to live at her house, he being wounded by the Prussian recruiters, and unable to pursue his journey: that I would send him money to come to me, or would myself come back and fetch him, thankfully paying every expense. She joyfully consented.

I cannot describe what my sensations were, or the despondence of my mind, when I thus saw myself wandering alone, and leaving, forsaking, as it were, the dearest of friends. These may certainly be numbered among the bitterest moments of my life. Often was I ready to return, and drag him along with me, though at last reason conquered sensibility. I drew near the end of my journey, and was impelled forward by hope.

The pleasure I had in meeting once more this tender mother, whose qualities of heart and mind were equally excellent, was inexpressible. She found a certain mode of conveying a letter to my dear mistress, at Berlin, who, a short time after, sent me a bill of exchange for four hundred ducats, upon Dantzic. To this my mother added a thousand rix-dollars, and a diamond cross, worth nearly half as much, remained a fortnight with me, and persisted, in spite of all remonstrance, in advising me to go to Vienna. My determination had been fixed for Petersburg; all my fears and apprehensions being awakened at the thought of Vienna, and which indeed, afterwards became the source of my cruel sufferings and sorrows. She would not yield in opinion, and promised her future assistance only in case of my obedience: it was my duty not to continue obstinate.

IX

Major Buschkow, whom I had known when Russian resident at Vienna, prevailed on me to visit him, and presented me to the general. I pleased him and may say, with truth, he behaved to me like a friend and a father. He advised me to enter into the Russian service, and gave me a company of dragoons, in the regiment of Tobolski, on condition I should not leave him, but employ myself in his cabinet; and his confidence and esteem for me were unbounded.

I was now at Dantzic, with my sick convoy, where another most remarkable event happened, which I, with good reason, shall ever remember.

I became acquainted with a Prussian officer, whose name I shall conceal, out of respect to his very worthy family: he visited me daily, and we often rode out together in the neighborhood of Dantzic.

My faithful servant became acquainted with his, and my astonishment was indeed great, when he one day said to me, with anxiety—"Beware, sir, of a snare laid for you by Lieutenant N——; he means to entice you out of town, and deliver you up to the Prussians." I asked him where he learned this—"From the lieutenant's servant," answered he, "who is my friend, and wishes to save me from misfortune."

I now, with the aid of a couple of ducats, discovered the whole affair; and learned it was agreed between the Prussian resident, Reimer, and the lieutenant, that the latter should entice me into the suburb of Langfuhr, where there was an inn on the Prussian territories; here eight recruiting under-officers were to wait concealed, and seize me the moment I entered the house, hurry me into a carriage, and drive away for Lauenberg in Pomerania. Two under-officers were to escort me, on horseback, as far as the frontiers, and the remainder to hold, and prevent me from calling for help, so long as we should remain on the territories of Dantzic.

I further learned my enemies were only to be armed with sabers, and that they were to wait behind the door. The two officers on horseback were to secure my servant, and prevent him from riding off and raising an alarm.

These preparations might easily have been rendered fruit-

less, by my refusing to accept the proposal of the lieutenant; but vanity gave me other advice; and resentment made me desirous of avenging myself for such detestable treachery.

Lieutenant N—— came, about noon, to dine with me as usual; was more pensive and serious than I had ever observed him before, and left me, at four in the afternoon, after having made me promise to ride early next day with him as far as Langfuhr. I observed my consent gave him great pleasure; and my heart pronounced sentence on the traitor. The moment he had left me, I went to the Russian resident, M. Scheerer, an honest Swiss, related the whole conspiracy, and asked whether I might not take six of the men under my command for my personal defense; I told him my plan, which he at first opposed; but seeing me obstinate, he answered, at last—"Do as you please; I must know nothing of the matter, nor will I make myself responsible."

I immediately joined my soldiers, selected six men, and took them, while it was dark, opposite the Prussian inn, hid them in the corn, with an order to run to my help, with their firelocks loaded, the first discharge they should hear, to seize all who should fall into their power, and only to fire in case of resistance. I provided them with fire-arms, by concealing them in the carriage which brought them to their hiding-place.

Notwithstanding all these precautions, I still thought it necessary to prevent surprise, by informing myself what were the proceedings of my enemies, lest my intelligence should have been false; and I learned from my spies that, at four in the morning, the Prussian resident, Reimer, had left the city with post-horses.

I loaded mine and my servant's horse and pocket pistols, prepared my Turkish saber, and in gratitude to the lieutenant's man, promised to take him into my service, being convinced of his honesty.

The lieutenant cheerfully entered about six in the morning, expatiated on the fineness of the weather, and jocosely told me I should be very kindly received by the handsome landlady of Langfuhr.

I was soon ready; we mounted, and left the town, attended by our servants. Some three hundred paces from the inn my

worthy friend proposed that we should alight, and let our servants lead the horses, that we might enjoy the beauty of the morning; I consented; and having dismounted, observed his treacherous eyes sparkle with pleasure.

The resident, Reimer, was at the window of the inn, and called out, as soon as he saw me—"Good morrow, captain! good morrow! come, come in, your breakfast is waiting." I, sneering, smiled, and told him I had not time at present. So saying I continued to walk; but my companion would absolutely force me to enter, took me by the arm, and partly struggled with me; on which, losing all patience, I gave him a blow, which almost knocked him down, and ran to my horses, as if I meant to fly.

The Prussians instantly rushed from behind their door, with clamor, to attack me. I fired at the first; my Russians sprang from their hiding-place, presented the pieces; and called—*"Stuy, stuy yebionnamat."*

The terror of the poor Prussians may well be supposed. All began to run. I had taken care to make sure of my lieutenant, and was next running to seize the resident, but he had escaped out of the back door, with the loss only of his white periwig. The Russians had taken four prisoners, and I commanded them to bestow fifty strokes upon each of them, in the open street. An ensign, named Bassecurg, having told me his name, and that he had been my brother's school-fellow, begged remission, and excused himself on the necessity which he was under to obey his superiors. I admitted his excuses, and suffered him to go. I then drew my sword, and bade the lieutenant defend himself; but he was so confused, that, after drawing his sword, he asked my pardon, laid the whole blame upon the resident, and had not power to put himself upon his guard. I twice jerked his sword out of his hand; and at last, taking the Russian corporal's cane, I exhausted my strength with beating him, without his offering the least resistance. Such is the meanness of detected treachery. I left him kneeling, saying to him—"Go, rascal, now, and tell your comrades the manner in which Trenck punishes robbers on the highway!"

The people had assembled round us during the action, to whom I related the affair; and the attack having happened

on the territories of Dantzic, the Prussians were in danger of being stoned by the populace. I and my Russians marched off victorious, proceeded to the harbor, embarked, and three or four days after, set sail for Riga.

It is remarkable that none of the public papers took any notice of this affair; no satisfaction was required. The Prussians, no doubt, were ashamed of being defeated in an attempt so perfidious.

I since have learned that Frederick, no doubt by the false representations of Reimer, was highly irritated; and what afterward happened proves his anger pursued me through every corner of the earth, till at last I fell into his power at Dantzic, and suffered a martyrdom most unmerited and unexampled.

And now behold me at sea on my voyage to Riga. I had eaten heartily before I went on board: a storm came on: I worked half the night, to aid the crew, but at length became sea-sick, and went to lie down. Scarcely had I closed my eyes before the master came with the joyful tidings, as he thought, that we were running for the port of Pillau. Far from pleasing, this, to me, was dreadful intelligence, I ran on deck, saw the harbor right before me, and a pilot coming off. The sea must now be either kept in a storm, or I fall into the hands of the Prussians; for I was known to the whole garrison of Pillau.

I desired the captain to tack about and keep the sea, but he would not listen to me. Perceiving this, I flew to my cabin, snatched my pistols, returned, seized the helm, and threatened the captain with instant death if he did not obey. My Russians began to murmur; they were averse to encountering the dangers of the storm, but luckily they were still more averse to meet my anger, overawed as they were by my pistols, and my two servants, who stood by me faithfully.

Half an hour after, the storm began to subside, and we fortunately arrived, the next day, in the harbor of Riga. The captain, however, could not be appeased, but accused me before the old and honorable Marshal Lacy, then governor of Riga. I was obliged to appear, and replied to the charge by relating the truth. The governor answered—"My obstinacy might have occasioned the death of a hundred and sixty per-

sons." I, smiling, retorted—"I have brought them all into port, please your excellency; and, for my part, my fate would have been more merciful, by falling into the hands of my God than into the hands of enemies. My danger was so great, that I forgot the danger of others; besides sir, I knew my comrades were soldiers, and feared death as little as I do." My answer pleased the fine gray-headed general, and he gave me a recommendation to Chancellor Bestuchef at Moscow.

X

THIS my splendid success in Russia displeased the great Frederick, whose persecution everywhere attended me, and who supposed his interest injured by my success in Russia. The incident I am going to relate was, at the time it happened, well known to, and caused much agitation among all the foreign ambassadors.

Lord Hyndford desired I would make him a fair copy of a plan of Cronstadt, for which he furnished the materials, with three additional drawings of the various ships in the harbor, and their names. There was neither danger nor suspicion attending this, the plan of Cronstadt being no secret, but publicly sold in the shops of Petersburg. England was likewise then in the closest alliance with Russia. Hyndford showed the drawing to Funk, the Saxon envoy, his intimate friend, who asked his permission to copy it himself. Hyndford gave him the plan signed with my name; and after Funk had been some days employed copying it, the Prussian minister, Goltz, who lived in his neighborhood, came in, as he frequently paid him friendly visits. Funk unsuspectingly showed him my drawing, and both lamented that Frederick had lost so useful a subject. Goltz asked to borrow it, for a couple of days, in order to correct his own; and Funk, one of the worthiest, most honest, and least suspicious of men, who loved me like a brother, accordingly lent the plan.

No sooner was Goltz in possession of it, than he hurried to the chancellor, with whose weaknesses he was well acquainted, told him his intent in coming was to prove, that a man who had once been unfaithful to his king and country, where he had been loaded with favors, would certainly betray, for his

own private interest, every state where he was trusted. He continued his preface, by speaking of the rapid progress I had made in Russia, and the free entrance I had found in the chancellor's house, where I was received as a son, and initiated in the secrets of the cabinet.

The chancellor defended me:—Goltz then endeavored to incite his jealousy, and told him my private interviews with his wife, especially in the palace garden, were publicly spoken of. This he had learned from his spies, he having endeavored, by the snares he had so artfully laid, to make my destruction certain.

He likewise led Bestuchef to suspect his secretary, S——n, was a party in the intrigue, till at last the chancellor became very angry. Goltz then took my plan of Cronstadt from his pocket, and added: "Your excellency is nourishing a serpent in your bosom. This drawing have I received from Trenck, copied from your cabinet designs, for two hundred ducats." He knew I was employed there sometimes with Oettinger, whose office it was to inspect the buildings, and repairs of all the Russian fortifications. Bestuchef was astonished, his anger became violent; and Goltz added fuel to the flame, by insinuating I should not be so powerfully protected by Bernes, the Austrian ambassador, were it not to favor the views of his own court. Bestuchef mentioned prosecution and the knout; Goltz replied, my friends were too powerful, my pardon would be procured, and the evil this way increased. They, therefore, determined to have me secretly secured, and privately conveyed to Siberia.

Thus, while I unsuspectingly dreamed of nothing but happiness, the gathering storm threatened destruction, which only was averted by accident, or God's good providence.

Goltz had scarcely left the place, triumphant, when the chancellor entered, with bitterness and rancor in his heart, into his lady's apartment, reproached her with my conduct, and, while she endeavored to soothe him, related all that had passed. Her penetration was much deeper than her husband's; she perceived there was a plot against me: she, indeed, knew my heart better than any other, and particularly that I was not in the want of a poor two hundred ducats. She could not, however, appease him; and my arrest was deter-

mined. She, therefore, instantly wrote me a line to the following purport:—

"You are threatened, dear friend, by a very imminent danger. Do not sleep to-night at home, but secure yourself at Lord Hyndford's till you hear further from me."

Secretary S——n, her confidant, (the same who, not long since, was Russian envoy at Ratisbon,) was sent with this note. He found me, after dinner, at the English ambassador's, and called me aside. I read the billet, was astonished at its contents, and showed it to Lord Hyndford. My conscience was void of reproach, except that we suspected my secret with the countess had been betrayed to the chancellor; and, fearing his jealousy, Hyndford commanded me to remain in his house till we should make further discovery.

We placed spies round the house where I lived; I was inquired for after midnight, and the lieutenant of the police came himself, and searched the house.

Lord Hyndford went, about ten in the morning, to visit the chancellor, that he might obtain some intelligence, who immediately reproached him for having granted an asylum to a traitor. "What has this traitor done?" said Hyndford. "Faithlessly copied a plan of Cronstadt, from my cabinet drawings," answered the chancellor, "which he has sold to the Prussian minister for two hundred ducats."

Hyndford was astonished; he knew me well, and also knew that he had then, in money and jewels, more than eight thousaid ducats of mine in his own hands: nor was he less ignorant of the little value I set on money, or of the sources whence I could obtain it, when I pleased. "Has your excellency actually seen this drawing of Trenck's?"—"Yes; I have been shown it by Goltz."—"I wish I might likewise be permitted to see it; I know Trenck's drawing, and make myself responsible that he is no traitor. Here is some mystery; be so kind as to desire Mr. Goltz will come, and bring his plan of Cronstadt. Trenck is at my house, shall be forthcoming instantly, and I will not protect him, if he proves guilty."

The chancellor wrote to Goltz, but he, artful as he was, had, no doubt, taken care to be informed that the lieutenant of the police had missed his prey. He, therefore, sent an excuse, and did not appear. In the meantime I entered; Hynd-

ford then addressed me with the openness of an Englishman, and asked—"Are you a traitor, Trenck? If so, you do not merit my protection, but you stand here a state prisoner. Have you sold a plan of Cronstadt to Mr. Goltz?" My answer may easily be supposed. Hyndford rehearsed what the chancellor had told him; I was desired to leave the room, and Funk was sent for. The moment he came in, Hyndford said —"Sir, where is that plan of Cronstadt which Trenck copied?" Funk, hesitating, replied—"I will go for it." "Have you it," continued Hyndford, "at home? Speak upon your honor."—"No, my lord; I have lent it for a few days to Mr. Goltz, that he may take a copy."

Hyndford immediately then saw the whole affair, told the chancellor the history of this plan, which belonged to him, and which he had lent to Funk, and requested a trusty person might be sent with him, to make proper search. Bestuchef named his first secretary, and to him were added Funk and the Dutch envoy, Schwart, who happened then to enter. All went together to the house of Goltz. Funk here demanded his plan of Cronstadt; Goltz gave it him and Funk returned it to Lord Hyndford.

The secretary and Hyndford both, then, desired he would produce the plan of Cronstadt, which he had bought of Trenck for two hundred ducats. His confusion now was great, and Hyndford firmly insisted this plan should be forthcoming, to vindicate the honor of Trenck, whom he held to be an honest man. On this, Goltz answered—"I have received my king's commands to prevent the preferment of Trenck in Russia, and I have only fulfilled the duty of a minister."

Hyndford spit on the ground, and said more than I now choose to repeat; after which the four gentlemen returned to the chancellor, and I was again called. Everybody complimented me, related what had passed, and the chancellor promised I should be recompensed; strictly, however, forbidding me to take any revenge on the Prussian ambassador, I having sworn, in the first transports of anger, to punish him wherever I should find him, even were it at the altar's foot.

My cousin Baron Trenck, died in the Spielberg, October 4, 1749, and left me his heir, on condition I should only serve the house of Austria. In March, 1750, Count Bernes received

the citation sent me to enter on this inheritance. I would hear nothing of Vienna; the abominable treatment of my cousin terrified me. I well knew the origin of his prosecution, the services he had rendered his country, and had been an eye-witness of the injustice by which he was repaid. Bernes, however, represented that the property left me was worth much above a million; that the empress would support me in the pursuit of justice, and that I had no personal enemy at Vienna; that million of certain property, in Hungary, was much superior to the highest expectations in Russia, where I myself had beheld so many changes of fortune, and the effects of family cabals. Russia he painted as dangerous, Vienna as secure, and promised me himself effectual assistance, as his embassy would end within the year. Were I once rich, I might reside in what country I pleased; nor could the persecutions of Frederick anywhere pursue me so ineffectually as in Austria. Snares would be laid for me everywhere else, as I had experienced in Russia. "What," said he, "would have been the consequences, had not the countess warned you of the impending danger? You, like many another honest and innocent man would have been sent to Siberia. Your innocence must have remained unattested, and yourself, in the universal opinion, a villain and a traitor."

These reasonings at length determined me: but having plenty of money, I thought proper to take Stockholm, Copenhagen, and Holland, in my way; and Bernes was, in the meantime, to prepare me a favorable reception at Vienna. He desired also I would give authority to get possession of the estates to which I was heir. My mistress strongly endeavored to detain me, but yielded at length to the force of reason. I tore myself away, and promised, on my honor, to return as soon as I had arranged my affairs at Vienna. She made the proposition of investing me with some foreign embassy, by which I might render the most effectual services to the court of Vienna. In this hope we parted with heavy hearts: she presented me with her portrait, and a snuff-box set with diamonds: the first of these, three years afterwards, was torn from my bosom by the officers in my first dungeon at Magdeburg, as I shall hereafter relate. The chancellor embraced me, at parting, with friendship. Apraxin, the minister of war, wept,

and clasped me in his arms, prophesying, at the same time, I should never be so happy as in Russia. I myself foreboded misfortune, and quitted Russia with regret; but still followed the advice of Hyndford and Bernes.

XI

All writers are not permitted to speak truth of monarchs and ministers. I am the father of eight children, and parental love and duty vanquish the inclination of the author; and this duty, this affection, have made me very cautious in relating what happened to me at Vienna, that I might thereby serve them more effectually, than by indulging the pride of the writer, or the vengeance of the man.

Since accounts so various, contradictory, and dishonorable to the name of Trenck, have been circulated in Vienna, concerning facts which happened thirty-seven years ago, I will here give a short abstract of them, and such as may be verified by the records of the courts. I pledge my honor to the truth of the statement, and, were I so allowed, would prove it to the conviction of any unprejudiced court of justice: but this I cannot hope, as princes are much more disposed to bestow unmerited favors, than to make retribution to those whom they have unjustly punished.

Francis Baron Trenck died in the Spielberg, October 4, 1749. It has been erroneously believed in Vienna, that his estates were confiscated by the sentence which condemned him to the Spielberg. He had committed no offense against the state, was accused of none, much less convicted. The court's sentence was, that the administration of his estate should be committed to Counsellor Kempf and Baron Peyaczcwitz, who were selected by himself, and the accounts of his stewards and farmers were to be sent him yearly. He continued, till his death, to have the free and entire disposal of his property.

I will now show how I have been deprived of this valuable inheritance, while I have been obliged to pay above sixty thousand florins to defray the legacies he had left; and when this narrative is read, it will no longer be affirmed at Vienna, that by the favors of the court, I inherited seventy-six thousand florins, or the lordship of Zwerbach, from Trenck. I shall proceed to my proofs.

The father of Baron Trenck, who died in the year 1743, governor of Leitschau, in Hungary, named me in his will the successor of his son, should he die without heirs-male.

This will was sent to be proved, according to form, at Vienna, after having been authenticated in the most legal manner in Hungary. I was heir, he had made no will; and even, in case of confiscation, my title to his father's estates still remained valid.

Trenck knew this but too well; he, as I have before related, was my worst enemy, and even attempted my life. I will, therefore, proceed to show the real intent of this crafty testament.

Determined no longer to live in confinement, or to ask forgiveness, by which, it was well known, he might have obtained his freedom, having lost all hopes of reimbursing his losses, his avarice was reduced to despair. His desire of fame was unbounded, and this could no way be gratified, but by having himself canonized for a saint, after spending his life in committing all the ravages of a pandour. Hence originated the following facts:

He knew I was the legal claimant to his father's estates. His father had bought, with the family-money, remitted from Prussia, the lordships of Prestowacz and Pleternitz, in Sclavonia; and he himself, during his father's life, and with his father's money, had purchased the lordship of Pakratz, for forty thousand florins; this must, therefore, descend also to me, he having no more power to will this from me than he had the remainder of his paternal inheritance. The property he himself had gained was consigned to administrators; but a hundred thousand florins had been expended in lawsuits, and sixty-three suits continued, actually, pending against him in court: the legacies he bequeathed amounted to eighty thousand florins. These he saw could not be paid, should I claim nothing more than the paternal inheritance; he therefore, to render me unfortunate after his death, craftily named me his universal heir, without mentioning his father's will, but endeavored, by his mysterious death, and the following conditions, to force the execution of his own will:

First, I was to become a Catholic;

SECONDLY, I was to serve only the house of Austria; and, LASTLY, he made his whole estate, without excepting the paternal inheritance, a *fidei commissum.*

Hence arose all my misfortunes, as indeed was his intention; for, but a short time before his death, he said to the governor, Baron Kottulinsky: "I shall now die contented, since I have been able to trick my cousin, and render him wretched."

His death, believed in Vienna to be miraculous, happened after the following manner; and by this he induced many weak people, who really believed him a saint, to further his views.

Three days before his death, while in perfect health, he desired the governor of the Spielberg would send for his confessor, for that St. Francis had revealed to him he should be removed into life everlasting on his birthday, at twelve o'clock. The Capuchin was sent for, but the prediction laughed at.

The day, however, after the departure of his confessor, he said: "Praise be to God! my end approaches, and my confessor is dead, and has appeared to me." Strange as it may seem, it was actually found to be true that the priest was dead. He now had all the officers of the garrison of Brunn assembled, tonsured his head like a Capuchin, took the habit of the order, publicly confessed himself in a sermon of an hour's length, and exhorted them all to holiness, acted the part of a most exemplary penitent, embraced all present, spoke with a smile of insignificance of all earthly possessions, took his leave, knelt down to prayers, slept calmly, rose, prayed again, and about eleven in the forenoon, October 4th, taking his watch in his hand, said: "Thanks be to my God! my last hour approaches." All laughed at such a farce from a man of such a character; yet they remarked that the left side of his face grew pale. He then leaned his arm on the table, prayed, and remained motionless, with his eyes closed. The clock struck twelve—no signs of life or motion could be discovered; they spoke to him, and found that he was really dead.

The word miracle was echoed through the whole country, and the transmigration of the pandour Trenck, from earth

to heaven, by St. Francis, proclaimed. The clew to this labyrinth of miracles, known only to me, is truly as follows:

He possessed the secret of what is called the *aqua toffana,* and had determined on death. His confessor had been intrusted with all his secrets, and with promissory notes, which he wished to invalidate. I am perfectly certain that he had returned a promissory note of a great prince, given for two hundred thousand florins, which has never been brought to account. The confessor, therefore, was to be provided for, that Trenck might not be betrayed, and a dose of poison was given him before he set off for Vienna: his death was the consequence. He took similar means with himself, and thus he knew the hour of his exit: finding he could not become the first on earth, he wished to be adored as a saint in heaven. He knew he should work miracles when dead, because he ordered a chapel to be built, willed a perpetual mass, and bequeathed the Capuchins sixty thousand florins.

Thus died this most extraordinary man, in the thirty-fourth year of his age, to whom nature had denied none of her gifts—who had been the scourge of Bavaria—the terror of France—and who had, with his supposed contemptible pandours, taken above six thousand Prussian prisoners. He lived a tyrant and enemy of men, and died a sanctified impostor.

Such was the state of affairs, as willed by Trenck, when I came to Vienna, in 1750, where I arrived with money and jewels to the amount of twenty thousand florins.

Instead of profiting by the wealth Trenck had acquired, I expended a hundred and twenty thousand florins of my own money, including what devolved to me from my uncle, his father, in the prosecution of his suits.

On my first audience, no one could be received more kindly than I was by the empress-queen. She spoke of my deceased cousin with much emotion and esteem, promised me all grace and favor, and informed me of the particular recommendations she had received on my behalf from Count Bernes. Finding sixty-three causes hanging over my head, in consequence of the inheritance of Trenck, to obtain justice in any one of which, at Vienna, would have employed the whole life of an honest man, I determined to renounce this in-

heritance, and claim only under the will, and as the heir of my uncle.

With this view I applied for, and obtained, a copy of that will, with which I personally appeared, and declared to the court, that I renounced the inheritance of Francis Trenck, would undertake none of his suits, nor be responsible for any of his legacies, and required only his father's estates, according to the legal will, which was produced; that is to say, the three lordships of Pakratz, Prestowacz, and Pleternits, without chattels or personal effects. Nothing could be more just or incontrovertible than this claim. What was my astonishment to be told, in open court, that her majesty had declared I must either wholly perform the articles of the will of Trenck, or be excluded the entire inheritance, and have nothing further to hope! What could be done? I ventured to remonstrate, but the will of the court was determined and absolute; I must become a Roman Catholic.

Subsequently, my estates were sequestered by the commissioners employed to see me righted; and out of the immense estates of Trenck, I only received 63,000 florins, with which I purchased the lordship of Zwerbach. The court of Austria, however, bestowed on me a captainship of cavalry, in the Cordova cuirassiers.

In the year 1754, and the month of March, my mother died in Prussia, and I requested permission of the court, that held the inheritance of Trenck, as a *fidei commissum*, to make a journey to Dantzic, to settle some family affairs with my brothers and sister, my estates being confiscated. This permission being granted, thither I went in May, where I, once more, fell into the hands of the Prussians, which forms the second great, and still more gloomy epoch in my life. All who read what follows, will shudder, will commiserate him, who feeling himself innocent, relates afflictions he has miserably encountered, and gloriously overcome.

I left Hungary, where I was in garrison, for Dantzic, where I had desired my brothers and sister to meet me, that we might settle our affairs. My principal intent, however, was a journey to Petersburg, there to seek the advice and aid of my friends, for law and persecution were not yet ended, at Vienna; and my captain's pay, and small income, were

scarcely sufficient to defray charges of attorneys and counselors.

It is here most worthy of remark, that I was told, by Prince Ferdinand, of Brunswick, governor of Magdeburg, he had received orders to prepare my prison at Magdeburg, before I set out from Hungary.

It is the more necessary to establish this truth, because that no one can comprehend why the great Frederick should have proceeded against me in a manner so cruel as, when it comes to be related, must raise the indignation of the just, and move hearts of iron to commiserate.

It is an incontrovertible truth, that I was betrayed and sold by men in Vienna, whose interest it was that I should be eternally silenced.

From Lauenburg I was conveyed, without delay, to Berlin, attended by a strong escort; and every means used to prevent an escape.

Arrived there, I was lodged over the grand guard-house, with two sentinels in my chamber, and one at the door. The king was at Potsdam, and here I remained three days; and the third, some staff-officers made their appearance, seated themselves at a table, and put the following questions to me:—

First.—What was my business at Dantzic?

Secondly.—Whether I was acquainted with M. Goltz, the Prussian ambassador in Russia?

Thirdly.—Who was concerned with me in the conspiracy at Dantzic?

When I perceived their intention, by these interrogations, I absolutely refused to reply, only saying I had been imprisoned in the fortress of Glatz, without hearing, or trial, by court martial: that, availing myself of the law of nature, I had, by my own exertions, procured my liberty, and that I was now a captain of cavalry in the Imperial service; that I demanded a legal trial for my first unknown offense, after which I engaged to answer all interrogatories, and prove my innocence; but that, at present, being accused of new crimes, without a hearing concerning my former punishment, the procedure was illegal. I was told they had no orders concerning this, and I remained dumb to all further questions.

They wrote some two hours, God knows what! A carriage came up; I was strictly searched, to find whether I had any weapons: thirteen or fourteen ducats, which I had concealed, were taken from me, and I was conducted, under a strong escort, through Spandau to Magdeburg. The officer here delivered me up to the captain of the guard at the citadel: the town-major came, and brought me to the dungeon, expressly prepared for me; a small picture of the countess of Bestuchef, set with diamonds, which I had kept concealed in my bosom, was now taken from me; the door was shut, and here was I left.

My dungeon was in a casemate, the fore part of which, six feet wide, and ten feet long, was divided by a party-wall. In the inner wall were two doors, and a third at the entrance of the casemate itself. The window in the seven-feet thick wall was so situated, that, though I had light, I could see neither heaven nor earth; I could only see the roof of the magazine: within and without this window were iron bars, and in the space between, an iron grating, so close, and so situated, by the rising of the walls, that it was impossible I should see any person without the prison, or that any person should see me. On the outside was a wooden palisade, six feet from the walls, by which the sentinels were prevented from conveying anything to me. I had a mattress, and a bedstead, but which was immovably ironed to the floor, so that it was impossible I should drag it and stand up to the window: beside the door, was a small iron stove and a night-table, in like manner fixed to the floor. I was not yet put in irons, and my allowance was a pound and a half per day of tasteless ammunition bread, and a small jug of water.

My three doors were kept ever shut, and I was left to such meditations as such feelings and such hopes might inspire. Daily, about noon, once in twenty-four hours, my pittance of bread and water was brought. The keys of all the doors were kept by the governor; the inner door was not opened, but my bread and water was delivered through an aperture. The prison-doors were opened only once a week, on a Wednesday, when the governor and town-major, my hole having been first cleaned, paid their visit.

Having remained thus two months, and observed this method was invariable, I began to execute a project I had formed, of the possibility of which I was convinced.

Where the night-table and stove stood, the floor was bricked, and this paving extended to the wall that separated my casemate from the adjoining one, in which was no prisoner. My window was only guarded by a single sentinel; I soon found among those who successively relieved guard, two kind-hearted fellows, who described to me the situation of my prison; hence I perceived I might effect my escape, could I but penetrate into the adjoining casemate, the door of which was not shut. Provided I had a friend and a boat waiting for me at the Elbe, or, could I swim across that river, the confines of Saxony were but a mile distant.

XII

The 27th of May was a cruel day in the history of my life. My cell in the Star-Fort had been finished sooner than Gefhardt had supposed; and at night, when I was preparing to fly, I heard a carriage stop before my prison. Oh, God! what was my terror! what were the horrors of this moment of despair! The locks and bolts resounded, the doors flew open, and the last of my poor remaining resources was to conceal my knife. The town-major, the major of the day, and a captain entered; I saw them by the light of their two lanterns. The only words they spoke were "Dress yourself;" which was immediately done. I still wore the uniform of the regiment of Cordova. Irons were given me, which I was obliged myself to fasten on my wrists and ankles; the town-major tied a bandage over my eyes, and, taking me under the arm, they thus conducted me to the carriage. It was necessary to pass through the city to arrive at the Star-Fort: all was silent, except the noise of the escort; but when we entered Magdeburg, I heard the people running, who were crowding together to obtain a sight of me. Their curiosity was raised, by the report that I was going to be beheaded. That I was executed on this occasion, in the Star-Fort, after having been conducted blindfold through the city, hath since been both affirmed and written, and the officers had then to propagate this error, that the world might remain

in utter ignorance concerning me. I indeed knew otherwise, though I affected not to have this knowledge: and, as I was not gagged, I behaved as if I expected death, reproached my conductors in language that even made them shudder, and painted their king in his true colors, as one who, unheard, had condemned an innocent subject by a despotic exercise of power.

My fortitude was admired, at the moment when it was supposed I thought myself leading to execution. No one replied, but their sighs intimated their compassion: certain it is, few Prussians willingly execute such commands. The carriage at length stopped, and I was brought into my new cell. The bandage was taken from my eyes. The dungeon was lighted by a few torches. God of heaven! what were my feelings when I beheld the whole floor covered with chains, a fire-pan, and two grim men standing with their smith-hammers!

To work went these engines of despotism!—Enormous chains were fixed to my ankle at one end, and at the other to a ring which was incorporated in the wall. This ring was three feet from the ground, and only allowed me to move about two or three feet to the right and left. They next riveted another huge iron ring, of a hand's breadth, round my naked body; to which hung a chain fixed into an iron bar, as thick as a man's arm. This bar was two feet in length, and at each end of it was a handcuff. The iron collar round my neck was not added till the year 1756.

No soul bade me good night—all retired in dreadful silence; —and I heard the horrible grating of four doors, that were successively locked and bolted upon me!

The cell had been finished with lime and plaster but eleven days, and everybody supposed it would be impossible I should exist in these damps above a fortnight. I remained six months, continually immersed in water, that trickled upon me from the thick arches under which I was; and I can safely affirm that, for the first three months I was never dry; yet did I continue in health. I was visited daily, at noon, after relieving guard, and the doors were then obliged to be left open for some minutes, otherwise the dampness of the air put out their candles.

This was my state, and here I sat, destitute of friends, helplessly wretched, preyed on by all the torture of thought, that continually suggested the most gloomy, the most dreadful of images. My heart was not yet wholly turned to stone, my fortitude was sunken to despondency—my dungeon was the very cave of despair—yet was my arm restrained, yet was this excess of misery endured.

What a strange thing is that called happiness! How shall I express my extreme joy, when, after eleven months of intolerable hunger, I was again indulged with a full feast of coarse ammunition-bread! The fond lover never rushed more eagerly to the arms of his expecting bride, the famished tiger more ravenously on his prey, than I upon this loaf; I ate, rested, surveyed the precious morsel, ate again, and absolutely shed tears of pleasure.—Breaking bit after bit, I had by evening devoured all my loaf.

Alas! my enjoyment was of short duration. I soon found that excess is followed by pain and repentance. My fasting had weakened digestion, and rendered it inactive. My body swelled, my water jug was emptied, cramps, colics, and at length, inordinate thirst, racked me all the night.

The next day I observed, as the four doors were opened, that they were only of wood, therefore questioned whether I might not even cut off the locks with the knife that I had so fortunately concealed; and, should this and every other means fail, then would be the time to die. I likewise determined to make an attempt even to free myself of my chains. I happily forced my right hand through the handcuff, though the blood trickled from my nails. My attempts on the left were long ineffectual; but by rubbing with a brick, which I got from my seat, on the rivet that had been negligently closed, I effected this also.

The chain was fastened to the rim round my body by a hook, one end of which was not inserted in the rim; therefore, by setting my foot against the wall, I had strength enough so far to bend this hook back, and open it, as to force out the link of the chain. The remaining difficulty was the chain that attached my foot to the wall: the links of this chain I took, doubled, twisted, and wrenched, till at length, nature having bestowed on me great strength, I made a

desperate effort, sprang forcibly up, and two links at once flew off.

Fortunate indeed, did I think myself; I hastened to the door, groped in the dark to find the clinchings of the nails by which the lock was fastened, and discovered no very large piece of wood need be cut. Immediately I went to work with my knife, and cut through the oak door, to find its thickness, which proved to be only one inch; therefore was it possible to open all the four doors in four-and-twenty hours.

Incessant and incredible labor made this possible, though it was the more difficult, as everything was to be done by feeling, I being totally in the dark; the sweat dropped, or rather flowed from my body; my fingers were clotted with my own blood, and my lacerated hands were one continued wound.

Daylight appeared; I clambered over the door that was half cut away, and got up to the window, in the space or cell that was between the double doors, as before described. Here I saw my dungeon was in the ditch of the first rampart: before me I beheld the road from the rampart, the guard but fifty paces distant, and the high palisades that were in the ditch, and must be scaled before I could reach the rampart. Hope grew stronger, my efforts were redoubled. The first of the next double doors was attacked, which likewise opened inward, and was soon conquered. The sun set before I had ended this, and the fourth was to be cut away as the second had been. My strength failed—both my hands were raw: I rested awhile, began again, and had made a cut of a foot long, when my knife snapt, and the broken blade dropped to the ground.

God of Omnipotence! what was I at this moment? Was there, God of Mercies! was there ever creature of thine more justified than I in despair?—The moon shone clear: I cast a wild and distracted look up to heaven, fell on my knees, and, in the agony of my soul, sought comfort; but no comfort could be found; nor religion, nor philosophy had any to give. I cursed not Providence—I feared not annihilation—I dared not Almighty vengeance:—God the Creator was the disposer of my fate: and if he heaped afflictions upon me he had

not given me strength to support, his justice would not therefore punish me. To him, the Judge of the quick and dead, I committed my soul, seized the broken knife, gashed through the veins of my left arm and foot, sat myself tranquilly down, and saw the blood flow. Nature, overpowered, fainted, and I know not how long I remained slumbering in this state.—Suddenly I heard my own name, awoke, and again heard the words—"Baron Trenck!" My answer was—"Who calls?"—And who indeed was it!—who but my honest grenadier Gefhardt!—my former faithful friend in the citadel!—The good, the kind fellow had got upon the rampart, that he might comfort me.

"How do you do?" said Gefhardt.—"Weltering in my blood!" answered I; "to-morrow you will find me dead."—"Why should you die?" replied he. "It is much easier for you to escape here than from the citadel. Here is no sentinel, and I shall soon find means to provide you with tools: if you can only break out, leave the rest to me."

It is impossible to describe how much I was exhausted. The prison swam with blood; and certainly but little was left in my body. With painful wounds, swelled and torn hands, I there stood, shirtless, felt an inclination to sleep almost irresistible, and scarcely had strength to keep my legs; yet was I obliged to rouse myself, that I might execute my plan.

With the bar that separated my hands, I loosened the bricks of my seat, which being newly laid, was easily done, and heaped them up in the middle of my prison. The inner door was quite open, and with my chains I so barricadoed the upper half of the second, as to prevent any one climbing over it. When noon came, and the first of the doors was unlocked, all were astonished to see the second open. There I stood a desperate man, besmeared with blood, the picture of horror, with a brick in one hand, and in the other my broken knife, crying, as they approached—"Keep off, Mr. Major, keep off!—Tell the governor I will live no longer in chains, and that here I stand, if he so pleases, to be shot; for so only will I be conquered. Here no man shall enter—I will destroy all that approach; here are my weapons—here will I die, in despite of tyranny!" The major was terrified,

wanted resolution, and made his report to the governor. I, meantime, sat down on my bricks, to wait what might happen; my secret intent, however, was not so desperate as it appeared. I sought only to obtain a favorable capitulation.

The governor, General Borck, presently came, attended by the town-major and some officers, and entered the outward cell, but sprung back the moment he beheld a figure like me, standing with a brick and unlifted arm. I repeated what I had told the major, and he immediately ordered six grenadiers to force the door. The front cell was scarcely six feet broad, so that no more than two at a time could attack my entrenchment; and when they saw my threatening bricks ready to descend, they leaped, terrified, back. A short pause ensued, and the old town-major, with the chaplain, advanced toward the door, to soothe me: the conversation continued some time; whose reasons were most satisfactory, and whose cause was the most just, I leave to the reader. The governor grew angry, and ordered a fresh attack. The first grenadier was knocked down, and the rest ran back, to avoid my missiles.

The town-major again began a parley.—"For God's sake, my dear Trenck!" said he, "in what have I injured you, that you endeavor to effect my ruin? I must answer for your having, through my negligence, concealed a knife. Be persuaded, I entreat you! Be appeased!—you are not without friends!"—My answer was—"But will you not load me with heavier irons than before?"

He went out, spoke with the governor, and gave me his word of honor that the affair should be no farther noticed, and that everything should be exactly reinstated as formerly.

Here ended the capitulation, and my wretched citadel was taken. The condition I was in was viewed with pity; my wounds were examined, a surgeon sent to dress them, another shirt was given me, and the bricks, clotted with blood, removed.

XIII

About three weeks after my attempt to escape, the good Gefhardt first came to stand sentinel over me; and the sentinel they had so carefully set was, indeed, the only hope

I could have of escape; for help must be had from without, or this was impossible.

The effort I had made had excited too much surprise and alarm for me to pass without strict examination; since, on the ninth day after I was confined, I had, in eighteen hours, so far broken through a prison built purposely for myself, by a combination of so many projectors, and with such extreme precaution, which prison had universally been declared impenetrable.

Gefhardt scarcely had taken his post before we had free opportunity of conversing together; for when I stood with one foot on my bedstead, I could reach the aperture through which light was admitted.

Gefhardt described the situation of my dungeon; and our first plan was to break under the foundation, which he had seen laid, and which he affirmed to be only two feet deep.

Money was the first thing necessary. Gefhardt was relieved during his guard, and returned bringing with him a sheet of paper rolled on wire, which he passed through my grating; as he also did a piece of small wax candle, some burning amadow (a kind of tinder), a match, and a pen. I now had light, and I pricked my finger, and wrote with blood to my faithful friend, Captain Ruckhardt, at Vienna, described my situation in a few words, sent him an acquittance for three thousand florins on my revenues, and requested he would dispose of a thousand florins to defray the expenses of his journey to Gummern, only two miles from Magdeburg. Here he was positively to be, on the 15th of August. About noon, on this same day, he was to walk, with a letter in his hand, and a man was there to meet him, carrying a roll of smoking tobacco, to whom he must remit the two thousand florins, and return to Vienna.

Having money to carry on my designs, I began to put my plan of burrowing under the foundation into execution. The first thing necessary was to free myself from my fetters. To accomplish this, Gefhardt supplied me with two small files, and by the aid of these, this labor, though great, was effected.

The cap, or staple of the foot-ring, was made so wide, that I could draw it forward a quarter of an inch. I filed

the iron which passed through it on the inside; and the more I filed this away, the farther I could draw the cap down, till at last the whole inside iron, through which the chains passed, was quite cut through; by this means I could slip off the ring, while the cap of the outside continued whole; and it was impossible to discover any cut, as only the outside could be examined. My hands, by continued efforts, I so compressed, as to be able to draw them out of the handcuffs. I then filed the hinge, and made a screw at pleasure, so that at the time of examination no proofs would appear. The rim round my body was but a small impediment, except the chain which passed from my hand-bar; and this I removed, by filing an aperture in one of the links, which, at the necessary hour, I closed with bread, rubbed over with rusty iron, first drying it by the heat of my body; and would wager any sum that, without striking the chain-link, with a hammer, no one, not in the secret, would have discovered this fracture.

The window was never strictly examined; I, therefore, drew the two staples by which the iron bars were fixed to the wall, and which I daily replaced, carefully plastering them over. I procured wire from Gefhardt, and tried how well I could imitate the inner grating: finding I succeeded tolerable, I cut the real grating totally away, and substituted an artificial one of my own fabricating, by which I obtained a free communication with the outside, additional fresh air, together with all necessary implements, tinder and candles. That the light might not be seen, I hung the coverlid of my bed before the window, so that I could work fearless and undetected.

Furnished with room to secrete them under the floor, I obtained more instruments, together with a pair of pistols, powder, ball, and a bayonet.

I now discovered that the foundation of my prison, instead of two, was sunken four feet deep. Time, labor, and patience, were all necessary to break out, unheard, and undiscovered; but few things are impossible where resolution is not wanting.

The hole I made was obliged to be four feet deep, corresponding with the foundation, and wide enough to kneel and stoop in: the lying down on the floor to work, the con-

tinual stooping to throw out the earth, the narrow space in which all must be performed, these made the labor incredible; and, after this daily labor, all things were to be replaced, and my chains again resumed, which alone required some hours to effect. My greatest aid was in the wax candles and light I had procured; but as Gefhardt stood sentinel only once a fortnight, my work was much delayed; the sentinels were forbidden to speak to me under pain of death; and I was too fearful of being betrayed to dare to seek new assistance.

I wrote once more to Buckhardt, at Vienna; sent him a new assignment for money, and desired he would again repair to Gummern, where he should wait six several nights, with two spare horses, on the glacis of Klosterbergen, at the time appointed, everything being prepared for flight. Within these six days, Gefhardt would have found means, either in rotation, or by exchanging the guard, to have been with me. Alas! the sweet hope of again beholding the face of the sun, of once more obtaining my freedom, endured but three days: Providence thought proper otherwise to ordain. Gefhardt sent his wife to Gummern with the letter, and this silly woman told the post-master her husband had a lawsuit at Vienna; that, therefore, she begged he would take particular care of the letter: for which purpose she slipped ten rix-dollars into his hand.

This unexpected liberality raised the suspicions of the Saxon post-master, who, therefore, opened the letter, read the contents, and instead of sending it to Vienna, or, at least, to the general post-master at Dresden, he preferred the traitorous act of taking it himself to the governor of Magdeburg, who then, as at present, was Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick.

What were my terrors, what my despair, when I beheld the prince himself, about three o'clock in the afternoon, enter my prison, with his attendants, present my letter, and ask, in an authoritative voice, who had carried it to Gummern. My answer was, I knew not. Strict search was immediately made, by smiths, carpenters, and masons; and, after half-an-hour's examination, they discovered neither my hole, nor the manner in which I disencumbered myself of my chains; they only saw that the middle grating, in the

aperture where the light was admitted, had been removed. This was boarded up the next day, and only a small air-hole left, of about six inches diameter.

The prince began to threaten; I persisted I had never seen the sentinel who had rendered me this service, nor asked his name. Seeing his attempts all ineffectual, the governor, in a milder tone, said—"You have ever complained, Baron Trenck, of not having hitherto been legally sentenced, or heard in your own defense; I give you my word and honor, this you shall be, and also that you shall be released from your fetters, if you will only tell me who took your letter." To this I replied, with all the fortitude of innocence—"Everybody knows, my lord, I have never deserved the treatment I have met with in my country. My heart is irreproachable. I seek to recover my liberty by every means in my power; but were I capable of betraying the man whose compassion has induced him to succor my distress—were I the coward that could purchase happiness at his expense, I then should, indeed, deserve to wear these chains with which I am loaded. For myself, do with me what you please; yet remember I am not wholly destitute—I am still a captain in the Imperial service, and a descendant of the house of Trenck."

Prince Ferdinand stood, for a moment, unable to answer, then renewed his threats, and left my dungeon. I have been since told, when he was out of hearing, he said to those round him—"I pity his hard fate and cannot but admire his strength of mind!"

He had scarcely been gone an hour, before I heard a noise near my prison. I listened—What could it be? I heard talking, and learned a grenadier had hanged himself to the palisados of my prison!

The officer of the guard, and the town-major, again entered my dungeon, to fetch a lantern they had forgotten; and the officer, at going out, told me, in a whisper—"One of your associates has just hanged himself."

It is impossible to impart my terror or sensations; I believed it could be only my kind, my honest Gefhardt. After many gloomy thoughts, and lamenting the unhappy end of so worthy a fellow, I began to recollect what the prince

had promised me, if I would discover my accomplice. I knocked at the door, desired to speak to the officer; he came to the window, and asked what I wanted? I requested he would inform the governor that, if he would send me light, pen, ink, and paper, I would discover my whole secret.

These were accordingly sent; an hour's time was granted; the door was shut, and I left alone. I sat myself down, began to write on my night-table, and was about to insert the name of Gefhardt, but my blood thrilled, and shrunk back to my heart. I shuddered, rose, went to the aperture of the window, and called—"Is there no man who, in compassion, will tell me the name of him who has hanged himself, that I may deliver many others from destruction?" The window was not nailed up till the next day; I therefore wrapped five pistoles in a paper, threw them out, called to the sentinel, and said—"Friend, take these, and save thy comrades; or go, betray me, and bring down innocent blood upon thy head!"

The paper was taken up; a pause of silence ensued: I heard sighs, and presently after, a low voice said—"His name is Schutz; he belonged to the company of Ripps."—I had never heard the name before, or known the man; but I, however, immediately wrote Schutz, instead of Gefhardt. Having finished the letter, I called the lieutenant, who took that and the light away, and again barred up the door of my dungeon. The duke, however, suspected there must be some collusion, and everything remained in the same state; I obtained neither hearing nor court-martial.

XIV

The seven years' war broke out about a week after, and the regiments took the field. Major Weyner came, for the last time, and committed me to the care of the new major of the militia, Bruckhausen, who was one of the most surly and stupid of men. I shall often have occasion to mention this man.

All the majors and lieutenants of the guard, who had treated me with compassion and esteem, now parted; and I became an old prisoner in a new world. I acquired greater confidence, however, by remembering that both officers and

men, in the militia, were much easier to gain over than in the regulars; the truth of which opinion was soon confirmed.

Lieutenant Sonntag got false handcuffs made for me, that were so wide I could easily draw my hands out; the lieutenants only examined my irons; the new handcuffs were made perfectly similar to the old, and Bruckhausen had too much stupidity to remark any difference.

The remainder of my chains I could disencumber myself of at pleasure. When I exercised myself, I held them in my hands, that the sentinels might be deceived by their clanking. The neck iron was the only one I durst not remove; it was likewise too strongly riveted. I filed through the upper link of the pendant chain, however, by which means I could take it off, and this I concealed with bread in the manner before mentioned.

So I could disencumber myself of most of my fetters, and sleep at ease.

XV

My time hung very heavy; everything was carefully examined, on the change of the garrison. A still stricter scrutiny might occur, and all my projects be discovered. This had nearly been effected by accident, as I shall here relate. I had, two years before, so tamed a mouse, that it would play round me, and eat from my mouth: in this small animal, I discovered proofs of intelligence too great to easily gain belief: were I to relate them, priests would rail, monks grumble, and such philosophers as suppose man alone endowed with the power of thought, allowing nothing but what they call instinct to animals, would proclaim me a fabulous writer, and my opinions heterodox to what they suppose sound philosophy. Should I live, perhaps I may hereafter publish an essay on this subject, in which this my mouse and a spider will appear as remarkable characters.

This intelligent mouse had nearly been my ruin. I had diverted myself with it during the night; it had been nibbling at my door, and capering on a trencher. The sentinels hearing our amusement, called the officers; they heard also, and added all was not right in my dungeon. At daybreak, my doors resounded; the town-major, a smith, and mason en-

tered: strict search was begun; flooring, walls, chains, and my own person, were all scrutinized, but in vain. They asked what was the noise they heard: I mentioned the mouse, whistled, and it came and jumped upon my shoulder. Orders were given that I should be deprived of its society; I earnestly entreated they would at least spare its life. The officer on guard gave me his word of honor he would present it to a lady, who would treat it with the utmost tenderness.

He took it away, and turned it loose in the guard-room, but it was tame to me alone, and sought a hiding-place. It had fled to my prison-door, and, at the hour of visitation, ran into my dungeon, immediately testifying its joy by its antic leaping between my legs. It is worthy of remark, that it had been taken away blindfold, that is to say, wrapped in a handkerchief. The guard-room was near a hundred paces from my dungeon. How did it find its master? Did it know, or did it wait for the hour of visitation? Had it remarked that the doors were daily opened?

All were desirous of obtaining this mouse, but the major carried it off for his lady; she put it into a cage, where it pined, refused all sustenance, and, in a few days, was found dead.

The loss of this little companion made me, for some time, quite melancholy, yet, on the last examination, I perceived it had so eaten away the bread, by which I had concealed the crevices I had made in counting the floor, that the examiners must be all but blind not to discover them. I was convinced my faithful little friend had fallen a necessary victim to its master's safety. My keepers were persuaded I had neither the will nor the power to make further attempts at freedom. This accident, however, determined me not to wait even the three months.

Intoxicated with hope and joy then, when I most ought to have been cool and clear, I seemed to have lost my understanding. I came to a resolution which will appear, to every reasonable man, extravagant, absurd, and pitiable. I was vain enough, stupid enough, mad enough, to form the design of casting myself on the generosity and magnanimity of the Great Frederick!—Should this fail, I still thought my lieutenant a certain savior.

Having heated my imagination with this lamentable scheme, I expected the hour of visitation with anxiety. The major entered: I bespoke him thus—

"I know, Sir, the great Prince Ferdinand is again in Magdeburg." (My new friend had told me this.) "Be pleased to inform him that he may first examine my prison, double the sentinels, and afterwards give me his commands, stating at what hour it will please him I should make my appearance in perfect freedom, on the glacis of Klosterbergen. If I prove myself capable of this, I then hope for the protection of Prince Ferdinand; and that he will relate my proceedings to the king, who may thereby be convinced of my conscience."

The major was astonished; supposed my brain turned. The proposal he held to be ridiculous, and the performance impossible. I however persisted; he rode to town, and returned with the sub-governor, Reichmann; the town-major, Riding; and the major of inspection. The answer they delivered was—That the prince promised me his protection, the king's favor, and a certain release from my chains, should I prove the truth of my assertion. I required they would appoint a time; they ridiculed the thing as impossible, and at last said that it would be sufficient could I only prove the practicability of such a scheme; but, should I refuse, they would immediately break up the whole flooring, and place sentinels in my dungeon night and day; adding, the governor would not admit of any actual breaking out.

After the most solemn promises of good faith, I immediately disencumbered myself of my chains, raised up my flooring, gave them my arms and implements, and also two keys, that my friend had procured me, to the doors of the subterranean gallery. This gallery I desired them to enter, and sound, with their sword hilts, at the place through which I was to break, which might be done in a few minutes. I further described the road I was to take through the gallery, informed them that two of the doors had not been shut for six months, and to the other they already had the keys; adding, I had horses waiting at the glacis, that would be immediately ready; the stables for which were unknown to them.

They went, examined, returned, put questions, which I

answered with as much precision as the engineer could have done who built the Star-Fort. They left me with seeming friendship, continued away about an hour, came back, told me the prince was astonished at what he had heard: that he wished me all happiness, and then took me, unfettered, to the guard-house. The major came in the evening, treated us with a sumptuous supper, assured me everything would happen to my wishes, and that Prince Ferdinand had already written to Berlin.

The guard was reënforced next day; two grenadiers entered the officer's room as sentinels. The whole guard loaded with ball before my eyes, the drawbridges were raised in open day, and precautions were taken as if it was supposed I intended to make attempts as desperate as those I had made in Glatz.

I now saw numerous workmen employed on my dungeon, and carts bringing quarry-stones. The officers on guard behaved with great kindness, kept a good table, at which I ate; but two sentinels, and an under-officer never quitted the guard-room. Conversation was very cautious, and this continued five or six days: at length it was my new friend the lieutenant's turn to mount guard; he appeared to be as friendly as formerly, but conference was difficult; he, however, found an opportunity to express his astonishment at my ill-timed discovery, told me the prince knew nothing of the affair, and that the report propagated through the garrison was, I had been surprised in making a new attempt.

I now saw my error, but, alas! too late. I assured my friend this step had been occasioned by my reliance on his promise. He lamented my mistake, but affirmed himself still the same. My courage strengthened, and I vowed vengeance against the mean conduct of the sub-governor.

My dungeon was completed in about a week. The town-major and major of the day reconducted me to it. My foot only was chained to the wall, but with links twice as strong as formerly; the remainder of my irons were never after added.

The officers soon remarked the loss of my accustomed fortitude and gloomy thoughtfulness. I was less industrious on my cups; the verses I wrote were desponding. The only comfort they could give was—"Patience, dear Trenck; your con-

dition cannot be worse; the king may not live forever." Small consolation this. Were I sick, they told me I then might hope my sufferings would soon have an end. If I recovered they pitied me, and lamented their continuance. What man of my rank and expectation ever endured what I have endured—ever was treated as I have been treated!

Peace had been concluded nine months. I was forgotten. At last, however, when I supposed all hope lost, the 24th of December, and the day of freedom came! At the hour of parade, Count Schlieben, lieutenant of the guards, arrived, and brought an order for my release.

The sub-governor supposed me weaker in intellect than I really was, and would not too suddenly tell me these happy tidings. He knew not the presence of mind, the fortitude, which the various dangers I had seen, had made habitual. Self-praise offends; yet, never was I too much elated in prosperity, nor depressed in adversity: never timid or undetermined in the moment of danger; and for the truth of this, I appeal to all who have known me personally, or been acquainted with those who have seen me in such situations.

My doors for the last time resounded! Several people entered; their countenances were more than usually cheerful; and the sub-governor, at their head, said—"This time, my dear Trenck, I am the joyful messenger of good news. Prince Ferdinand has prevailed on the king to let your irons be taken off."—Accordingly to work went the smith.—"You shall also," continued he, "have better apartments."—"I am free, then," said I, "and you are afraid to tell me too suddenly. Speak! fear not! I can moderate my transports."

"Then you are free!" was the reply.

The sub-governor first embraced me, and afterward his attendants.

He asked me what clothes I would wish. I answered, the uniform of my regiment. The tailor attended, and took measure. Reichmann told him it must be made by the morning. The man excused himself, because it was Christmas-eve. "So, then, this gentleman must remain in his dungeon, because it is holiday with you." The tailor was answered, and promised to be ready.

The smith having ended his work, I was taken to the guard-

room: congratulations were universal, and the town-major administered the oath customary to all state prisoners.

First.—That I should avenge myself on no man.

Secondly.—That I should neither enter the Prussian nor Saxon states.

Thirdly.—That I should never relate, by speech or in writing, what had happened to me.

Fourthly.—And that, so long as the king lived, I should neither serve in a civil nor military capacity.

Count Schlieben delivered me a letter from the imperial minister, General Reidt, in Berlin, to the following purport: —That he was heartily rejoiced at having found an opportunity of obtaining my liberty from the king; and that I must cheerfully obey the requisitions of Count Schlieben, whose orders were to accompany me to Prague.

XVI

Reader, if thou hast noble thoughts, rejoice with me, and from my history learn that evil itself may convert to good. In the nineteenth year of my age, I lost my fortune, my liberty, my all—honor and fortitude excepted; and these it was not in the power of the despot to take. Two-and-forty years have I lived deprived of my property; two-and-forty years endured poverty, and even excessive indigence, with the exception of some few intervals, without ever being guilty of meanness; and, in the moment of good fortune, I have been liberal even to prodigality. I often have been deceived, but never was a deceiver. Those who plundered me blush at my name. I walk proudly even in the presence of kings. I write truths without disguise, and my writings find toleration and privilege. I was despised, condemned, rejected, yet obtained, even in the dungeon's depth, than which no man could descend lower, the general esteem and approbation of the worthy.

Joyfully do I journey to the shores of death. My duty is fulfilled, my end attained, tranquillity deserved. My conscience is void of reproach, posterity shall bless my memory, and only the unfeeling, the wicked, the confessors of princes and the impious impostor, shall vent their rage against my writings. My few remaining hours of life shall still be dedi-

cated to the love of men. For my own part, my wants are few. My mind is desirous of repose; and should this be denied me, still will I not murmur. I now wish to steal gently, though not wholly unknown, toward the last asylum, whither, if I had gone in my youth, it must have been with colors flying. Grant, Almighty God! that the prayer I this day make may be heard, and that such may be the conclusion of my eventful life.

THE END

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

THE MOST CHARMING AND MOST IRRESPONSIBLE OF IRISH AUTHORS

1728-1774

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Had Oliver Goldsmith ever written for the world a complete autobiography it would unquestionably have been among the most delightful books in the world. The few of his personal letters which have survived to us give ample evidence of this. He writes of himself with an openness, a simple frankness, which is charming. His whimsies are as extravagant as his generosity. He is constitutionally incapable of seeing more than one side of a question at a time, and he adopts with extravagant intensity whichever side he happens to have noted.

Though born in Ireland, Goldsmith lived most of his life in London, where he became the most noted poet of his day. He was very successful also as a prose writer and dramatist. Most men in his position would have made a fortune, but he gave and spent money with a recklessness which kept him poor. Never, perhaps, has any other person so utterly irresponsible risen to such fame.

The first of his letters here given is the one best known. His family had repeatedly started him out on one life-road after another. Finally they with much difficulty raised money to send him to America. How and why he failed to get there, he tells in his own light-hearted fashion. The second letter, written eight years later, looks at life from the tragic side. He had become famous, but found fortune lacking. Hence he, quite childishly, inveighs against all the world, a world which was treating him as kindly as it could.

Goldsmith died before he was fifty; and the great Dr. Samuel Johnson wrote as his epitaph that in literature Goldsmith had "touched nothing which he did not adorn."

A LETTER TO GOLDSMITH'S MOTHER, MRS. ANNE GOLDSMITH

[1751.]

My dear Mother,—If you will sit down and calmly listen to what I say, you shall be fully resolved in every one of

those many questions you have asked me. I went to Cork and converted my horse, which you prize so much higher than Fiddleback, into cash, took my passage in a ship bound for America, and, at the same time, paid the captain for my freight and all the other expenses of my voyage. But it so happened that the wind did not answer for three weeks; and you know, mother, that I could not command the elements. My misfortune was that when the wind served I happened to be with a party in the country, and my friend the captain never inquired after me, but set sail with as much indifference as if I had been on board. The remainder of my time I employed in the city and its environs, viewing everything curious; and you know no one can starve while he has money in his pocket.

Reduced, however, to my last two guineas, I began to think of my dear mother and friends whom I had left behind me, and so bought that generous beast Fiddleback, and made adieu to Cork with only five shillings in my pocket. This to be sure was but a scanty allowance for man and horse towards a journey of above a hundred miles; but I did not despair, for I knew I must find friends on the road.

I recollected particularly an old and faithful acquaintance I made at college, who had often and earnestly pressed me to spend a summer with him, and he lived but eight miles from Cork. This circumstance of vicinity he would expatiate on to me with peculiar emphasis. "We shall," says he, "enjoy the delights of both city and country, and you shall command my stable and my purse."

However, upon the way, I met a poor woman all in tears, who told me her husband had been arrested for a debt he was not able to pay, and that his eight children must now starve, bereaved as they were of his industry, which had been their only support. I thought myself at home, being not far from my good friend's house, and therefore parted with a moiety of all my store; and pray, mother, ought I not to have given her the other half-crown, for what she got would be of little use to her? However, I soon arrived at the mansion of my affectionate friend, guarded by the vigilance of a huge mastiff, who flew at me, and would have torn me to pieces but for the assistance of a woman, whose countenance was not less grim

than that of the dog; yet she with great humanity relieved me from the jaws of this Cerberus, and was prevailed on to carry up my name to her master.

Without suffering me to wait long, my old friend, who was then recovering from a severe fit of sickness, came down in his night-cap, night-gown, and slippers, and embraced me with the most cordial welcome, showed me in, and, after giving me a history of his indisposition, assured me that he considered himself peculiarly fortunate in having under his roof the man he most loved on earth, and whose stay with him must, above all things, contribute to his perfect recovery. I now repented sorely I had not given the poor woman the other half-crown, as I thought all my bills of humanity would be punctually answered by this worthy man. I revealed to him my whole soul; I opened to him all my distresses; and freely owned that I had but one half-crown in my pocket; but that now, like a ship weathering out the storm, I considered myself secure in a safe and hospitable harbor. He made no answer, but walked about the room rubbing his hands as one in deep study. This I imputed to the sympathetic feelings of a tender heart, which increased my esteem for him, and, as that increased, I gave the most favorable interpretation to his silence. I construed it into delicacy of sentiment, as if he dreaded to wound my pride by expressing his commiseration in words, leaving his generous conduct to speak for itself.

It now approached six o'clock in the evening, and as I had eaten no breakfast, and as my spirits were raised, my appetite for dinner grew uncommonly keen. At length the old woman came into the room with two plates, one spoon, and a dirty cloth, which she laid upon the table. This appearance, without increasing my spirits, did not diminish my appetite. My protectress soon returned with a small bowl of sago, a small porringer of sour milk, a loaf of stale brown bread, and the heel of an old cheese all over crawling with mites. My friend apologized that his illness obliged him to live on slops, and that better fare was not in the house; observing, at the same time, that a milk diet was certainly the most healthful; and at eight o'clock he again recommended a regular life, declaring that for his part he would *lie down with the lamb and rise with the lark.* My hunger was at this time so exceedingly

sharp that I wished for another slice of the loaf, but was obliged to go to bed without even that refreshment.

This lenten entertainment I had received made me resolve to depart as soon as possible: accordingly next morning, when I spoke of going, he did not oppose my resolution; he rather commended my design, adding some very sage counsel upon the occasion. "To be sure," said he, "the longer you stay away from your mother the more you will grieve her and your other friends; and possibly they are already afflicted at hearing of this foolish expedition you have made." Notwithstanding all this, and without any hope of softening such a sordid heart, I again renewed the tale of my distress, and asking "how he thought I could travel above a hundred miles upon one half-crown?" I begged to borrow a single guinea, which I assured him should be repaid with thanks. "And you know, sir," said I, "it is no more than I have often done for you." To which he firmly answered, "Why, look you, Mr. Goldsmith, that is neither here nor there, I have paid you all you ever lent me, and this sickness of mine has left me bare of cash. But I have bethought myself of a conveyance for you; sell your horse and I will furnish you with a much better one to ride on."

I readily grasped at this proposal, and begged to see the nag; on which he led me to his bedchamber, and from under the bed he pulled out a stout oak stick. "Here he is," said he; "take this in your hand, and it will carry you to your mother with more safety than such a horse as you ride." I was in doubt, when I got it into my hand, whether I should not, in the first place, apply it to his pate; but a rap at the street door made the wretch fly to it, and when I returned to the parlor, he introduced me, as if nothing of the kind had happened, to the gentleman who entered, as Mr. Goldsmith, his most ingenious and worthy friend, of whom he had so often heard him speak with rapture. I could scarcely compose myself; and must have betrayed indignation in my mien to the stranger, who was a counselor-at-law in the neighborhood, a man of engaging aspect and polite address.

After spending an hour, he asked my friend and me to dine with him at his house. This I declined at first, as I wished to have no further communication with my hospitable friend;

but at the solicitation of both I at last consented, determined as I was by two motives: one, that I was prejudiced in favor of the looks and manner of the counselor; and the other, that I stood in need of a comfortable dinner. And there, indeed, I found everything that I could wish, abundance without profusion, and elegance without affectation. In the evening, when my old friend, who had eaten very plentifully at his neighbor's table, but talked again of lying down with the lamb, made a motion to me for retiring, our generous host requested I should take a bed with him, upon which I plainly told my old friend that he might go home and take care of the horse he had given me, but that I should never reënter his doors. He went away with a laugh, leaving me to add this to the other little things the counselor already knew of his plausible neighbor.

And now, my dear mother, I found sufficient to reconcile me to all my follies; for here I spent three whole days. The counselor had two sweet girls for his daughters, who played enchantingly on the harpsichord; and yet it was but a melancholy pleasure I felt the first time I heard them; for that being the first time also that either of them had touched the instrument since their mother's death, I saw the tears in silence trickle down their father's cheeks. I every day endeavored to go away, but every day was pressed and obliged to stay. On my going, the counselor offered me his purse, with a horse and servant to convey me home; but the latter I declined, and only took a guinea to bear my necessary expenses on the road.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

A LETTER TO GOLDSMITH'S BROTHER, THE REV. HENRY GOLDSMITH

[1759.]

DEAR SIR,—Your punctuality in answering a man, whose trade is writing, is more than I had reason to expect; and yet you see me generally fill a whole sheet, which is all the recompense I can make for being so frequently troublesome. I shall, the beginning of next month, send over two hundred and fifty books, which are all that I fancy can be well sold among you, and I would have you make some distinction in the persons who have subscribed. The money, which will amount to sixty pounds, may be left with Mr. Bradley, as

soon as possible. I am not certain but I shall quickly have occasion for it. I have met with no disappointment with respect to my East Indian voyage; nor are my resolutions altered; though, at the same time, I must confess it gives me some pain to think I am almost beginning the world at the age of thirty-one.

Though I never had a day's sickness since I saw you, yet I am not that strong and active man you once knew me. You scarcely can conceive how much eight years of disappointment, anguish, and study have worn me down. If I remember right, you are seven or eight years older than I, yet I dare venture to say, that if a stranger saw us both, he would pay me the honors of seniority. Imagine to yourself a pale, melancholy visage, with two great wrinkles between the eye-brows, with an eye disgustingly severe, and a big wig, and you may have a perfect picture of my present appearance. On the other hand, I conceive you as perfectly sleek and healthy, passing many a happy day among your own children, or those who knew you a child. Since I knew what it was to be a man, this is a pleasure I have not known.

I have passed my days among a parcel of cool designing beings, and have contracted all their suspicious manner in my own behavior. I should actually be as unfit for the society of my friends at home, as I detest that which I am obliged to partake of here. I can now neither partake of the pleasure of a revel, nor contribute to raise its jollity. I can neither laugh nor drink, have contracted a hesitating, disagreeable manner of speaking, and a visage that looks ill-nature itself; in short, I have thought myself into a settled melancholy, and an utter disgust of all that life brings with it. Whence this romantic turn, that all our family are possessed with? Whence this love for every place and every country but that in which we reside? for every occupation but our own? this desire of fortune, and yet this eagerness to dissipate? I perceive, my dear sir, that I am at intervals for indulging this splenetic manner, and following my own taste, regardless of yours.

The reasons you have given me for breeding up your son as a scholar are judicious and convincing. I should, however, be glad to know for what particular profession he is designed. If he be assiduous, and divested of strong passions (for pas-

sions in youth always lead to pleasure), he may do very well in your college; for it must be owned that the industrious poor have good encouragement there, perhaps better than in any other in Europe. But if he has ambition, strong passions, and an exquisite sensibility of contempt, do not send him there, unless you have no other trade for him except your own. It is impossible to conceive how much may be done by a proper education at home. A boy, for instance, who understands perfectly well Latin, French, arithmetic, and the principles of the civil law, and can write a fine hand, has an education that may qualify him for any undertaking. And these parts of learning should be carefully inculcated, let him be designed for whatever calling he will.

Above all things, let him never touch a romance or novel; those paint beauty in colors more charming than nature, and describe happiness that man never tastes. How delusive, how destructive are those pictures of consummate bliss! They teach the youthful mind to sigh after beauty and happiness which never existed; to despise the little good which fortune has mixed in our cup, by expecting more than she ever gave; and in general, take the word of a man who has seen the world, and who has studied human nature more by experience than precept,—take my word for it, that books teach us very little of the world. The greatest merit in a state of poverty would only serve to make the possessor ridiculous; may distress, but cannot relieve him. Frugality, and even avarice, in the lower orders of mankind, are true ambition. These afford the only ladder for the poor to rise to preferment. Teach then, my dear sir, to your son thrift and economy. Let his poor wandering uncle's example be placed before his eyes.

I had learned from books to be disinterested and generous, before I was taught from experience the necessity of being prudent. I had contracted the habits and notions of a philosopher, while I was exposing myself to the insidious approaches of cunning; and often by being, even with my narrow finances, charitable to excess, I forgot the rules of justice, and placed myself in the very situation of the wretch who thanked me for my bounty. While I am in the remotest part of the world tell him this, and perhaps he may improve from my example.

But I find myself again falling into my gloomy habits of thinking.

My mother, I am informed, is almost blind; even though I had the utmost inclination to return home, under such circumstances I could not; for to behold her in distress without a capacity of relieving her from it, would add too much to my splenetic habits. Your last letter was much too short, it should have answered some queries I had made in my former. Just sit down as I do, and write forward until you have filled all your paper; it requires no thought, at least from the ease with which my own sentiments rise when they are addressed to you. For, believe me, my head has no share in all I write; my heart dictates the whole. Pray, give my love to Bob Bryanton, and entreat him, from me, not to drink. My dear sir, give me some account about poor Jenny (his younger sister, who had married unprosperously). But her husband loves her; if so, she cannot be unhappy.

I know not whether I should tell you—yet why should I conceal those trifles, or, indeed, anything from you?—there is a book of mine will be published in a few days, the life of a very extraordinary man—no less than the great Voltaire. You know already by the title, that it is no more than a catchpenny. However, I spent but four weeks on the whole performance, for which I received twenty pounds. When published, I shall take some method of conveying it to you, unless you may think it dear of the postage, which may amount to four or five shillings. However, I fear you will not find an equivalent of amusement.

Your last letter, I repeat it, was too short; you should have given me your opinion of the design of the heroi-comical poem which I sent you; you remember I intended to introduce the hero of the poem as lying in a paltry ale-house. You may take the following specimen of the manner, which I flatter myself is quite original. The room in which he lies may be described somewhat this way:

The window, patched with paper, lent a ray,
That feebly showed the state in which he lay.
The sandy floor, that grits beneath the tread:
The humid wall with paltry pictures spread;

The game of goose was there exposed to view,
And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew;
The seasons framed with listing, found a place,
And Prussia's monarch showed his lamp-black face.
The morn was cold; he views with keen desire
A rusty grate unconscious of a fire.
An unpaid reckoning on the frieze was scored,
And five cracked teacups dressed the chimney board.

And now imagine after his soliloquy, the landlord to make his appearance, in order to dun him for the reckoning:

Not with that face, so servile and so gay,
That welcomes every stranger that can pay,
With sulky eye he smoak'd the patient man,
Then pull'd his breeches tight, and thus began, etc.

All this is taken, you see, from nature. It is a good remark of Montaigne's, that the wisest men often have friends with whom they do not care how much they play the fool. Take my present follies as instances of regard. Poetry is a much easier, and more agreeable, species of composition than prose; and, could a man live by it, it were not unpleasant employment to be a poet. I am resolved to leave no space, though I should fill it up only by telling you, what you very well know already,—I mean, that I am your most affectionate friend and brother,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

CATHERINE THE GREAT

A GERMAN PRINCESS WHO BECAME RUSSIA'S MOST POWERFUL EMPRESS

(1729-1796)

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

All history offers no career more strange, more abnormal, more horrible and yet more triumphant than that of Catherine II of Russia, commonly called Catherine the Great. Hence it becomes a matter of tremendous interest to every student of human nature that this amazing Catherine should once have yielded to that autobiographical impulse so common to her century, and started to write her own memoirs. This impulse came upon her before she was thirty, and before she had seized the Russian throne as her own by right. Moreover, her manuscript breaks off abruptly in 1759, and so depicts only her earlier years. But for those years it is indeed an astounding, an unbelievably hideous picture of what a sink of utter iniquity the Russian court had become under the control of German intriguers.

As for the Empress Catherine, even her name and her religion were not her own. She was born the Duchess Sophia, a Protestant princess, in a tiny German state. At the age of twelve, she was affianced by her scheming mother to the imbecile heir of the Russian throne, the Grand Duke Peter. Poor little Sophia was thereon brought to Russia, made a member of the Russian Church and rechristened by the favorite Russian name of Catherine. She was wedded to her foul and impossible husband at sixteen, and was thereafter deliberately taught to seek association with other men that she might bring the Russian throne an heir.

Not until 1761 did Peter actually succeed to the throne; and in July of 1762, Catherine, finding that he intended to destroy her, anticipated his cumbrous slowness, seized the throne for herself, and had him slain. Under her vigorous rule the Russian court remained almost as evil as before, but became much more intellectual. She drew to her side the great thinkers and writers of every land; she honestly tried to improve the condition of the Russian people; and she enormously extended Russia's territory and power. There is no book in the world more instructive upon some sides of human nature and the aristocratic "ancient régime" than Catherine's "Memoirs."

The manuscript itself has had a remarkable history. The great Empress kept it concealed until her death and left it in confidence to her son and heir. He also suppressed it, perhaps he even destroyed some later portion of it. Not until long after his death did some copies of it begin, about 1820, to circulate in secret through the Russian court. The Emperor Nicholas, learning of their appearance, had them sternly and completely suppressed; and not until a century after it was written was the grim narrative allowed a wider publication.

MEMOIRS OF THE EMPRESS CATHERINE II

PART I

FORTUNE is not so blind as people think. Her movements are often the result of precise and well-planned measures, which escape the perception of common minds; still oftener are they the result of personal qualities, character, and conduct.

To render this more evident, I will propose the following syllogism:

Qualities and character shall form the major;
Conduct, the minor;
Good or evil fortune, the conclusion.

Here are two striking illustrations: PETER III., CATHERINE II.

PETER III, HIS FATHER AND MOTHER

The mother of Peter III was a daughter of Peter I. Two months after the birth of her son she died of consumption, in the little town of Kiel, in Holstein, a victim to grief at finding herself established in such a place and married so badly. Charles Frederic, Duke of Holstein, nephew of Charles XII., King of Sweden, was the father of Peter III. He was a weak prince, ugly, little, sickly, and poor (see the Journal of Berkholz, in Busching's Magazine). He died in 1739, leaving his son, not quite eleven years old, under the guardianship of his cousin, Adolphus Frederic, Bishop of Lubeck and Duke of Holstein, since elected King of Sweden, in consequence of the peace of Abo, and the recommendation of the Empress Elizabeth. The education of Peter III. was placed under the superintendence of the Grand Marshal of his Court, Brummer, a Swede by birth, under whom were the Great Chamberlain Berkholz, author of the journal just al-

luded to, and four chamberlains, two of whom, Adlerfeldt, author of a history of Charles XII., and Wachmeister, were Swedes, and the other two, Wolff and Madfeldt, natives of Holstein.

The Prince was educated for the throne of Sweden, in a court too large for the country which contained it; and this court was divided into several factions mutually hating each other, each seeking to obtain an ascendancy over the mind of the Prince, instead of endeavoring to form his character, and all bent upon inspiring him with an aversion for those opposed to them. The young Prince cordially hated Brummer; nor did he like any of his attendants, because they kept him under restraint.

Even from the age of ten, Peter III. showed a fondness for drink. He had to submit to numerous presentations, and was never out of sight night or day. The persons he most liked during his childhood and the first years of his residence in Russia were two old valets de chambre—Cramer, a Livonian, and Roumberg, a Swede. The latter was the favorite; he was a somewhat rough and vulgar person, who had been a dragoon under Charles XII. Brummer, and consequently Berkholz, who only saw with the eyes of Brummer, was attached to the Prince Guardian and Administrator; all the rest were dissatisfied with this Prince, and still more so with his adherents.

When the Empress Elizabeth ascended the throne of Russia, she sent the Chamberlain Korf into Holstein to demand her nephew. In consequence, the Prince Administrator immediately sent him off, accompanied by the Grand Marshal Brummer, the Chamberlain Berkholz, and the Chamberlain Decken, nephew of the former. The Empress received the Prince with great joy, and soon after his arrival set out for Moscow to be crowned. She had determined to declare him her heir; but, first of all, it was indispensable that he should be received into the Greek church. The enemies of the Grand Marshal Brummer, and particularly the Great Chamberlain Count Bestoujeff and the Count M. Panin, who was for a long time Russian minister in Sweden, pretended to have in their possession convincing proofs that Brummer, from the moment he found the Empress determined to declare her nephew heir presumptive to her throne, took as much pains to corrupt the

mind and heart of his pupil as he had before taken to render him worthy of the crown of Sweden. But I have always doubted this atrocity, and looked upon the education of Peter III. as a conflict of unfortunate circumstances. I will relate what I have seen and heard, and even that will explain a great deal.

I saw Peter III. for the first time when he was eleven years old. He was then at Eutin with his guardian, the Prince Bishop of Lubeck, some months after the death of his father, the Duke Charles Frederic. The Prince Bishop had assembled all his family at Eutin, in 1739, in order to meet his ward. My grandmother, mother of the Prince Bishop, and my mother, his sister, had come from Hamburg with me. I was then ten years old. Prince Augustus and the Princess Anne, brother and sister of the Prince Guardian and Administrator of Holstein, were also there; and it was then I heard it stated, in the presence of the assembled family, that the young Duke was inclined to drink, his attendants finding it difficult to prevent him from getting intoxicated at table; that he was restive and impetuous; without affection for those about him, and especially disliking Brummer; that, otherwise, he was not wanting in vivacity, but that he was of a weak and sickly constitution. In point of fact, his complexion was pale, and he appeared thin and delicate. To this child his attendants wished to give the appearance of a complete man; and for this purpose he was tormented with restraints only calculated to teach him in his tender years falsehood as well in character as in deportment.

The little court of Holstein had not long been settled in Russia when an embassy arrived from Sweden, requesting the Empress to allow her nephew to be placed on the throne of that kingdom. Elizabeth, however, had already announced her intentions by the preliminaries of the peace of Abo, as previously mentioned; and she replied to the Swedish diet that she had declared her nephew heir to the throne of Russia, and that she adhered to the preliminaries of the peace of Abo, which gave to Sweden, as heir presumptive to the crown, the Prince Administrator of Holstein. (This Prince had had an elder brother, to whom the Empress had been affianced at the death of Peter I. The marriage had not taken place, as

the Prince died of small-pox a few weeks after the betrothal; but the Empress retained much affection for his memory, as she showed by many marks of favor to all the family.)

Peter III., then, was declared heir to Elizabeth and Grand Duke of Russia, after having previously made his profession of faith according to the rites of the Greek church. His instructor on this occasion was Simon Theodorsky, since Archbishop of Pleskov. The Prince had been baptized and brought up in the Lutheran creed in its most rigid and least tolerant form. He had always been refractory under instruction of every kind; and I have heard his attendants say that, while at Kiel, they had infinite trouble in getting him to church on Sundays and holidays, and making him perform the acts of devotion required of him; and that most of the time he displayed his irreligion in the presence of Simon Theodorsky. His Royal Highness took it into his head to dispute upon every point, and his attendants had often to be called in to check his ill-humor or impetuosity. At last, after giving a deal of trouble, he submitted to the wishes of his aunt the Empress; though, whether from prejudice, habit, or the spirit of contradiction, he frequently took care to let it be seen that he would rather have gone to Sweden than remain in Russia. He retained Brummer, Berkholz, and his Holstein attendants until his marriage. Some other masters were added to these as a matter of routine: Mr. Isaac Wesselowsky for the Russian language; he came but rarely at first, and finally not at all; the other was the Professor Stehlein, who was to teach him mathematics and history, but who, in reality, only played with him, and served him as a buffoon. The person who was most assiduous was the ballet-master, Laudé, who taught him dancing.

(1744)

At first, the sole occupation of the Grand Duke, when in his private apartment, was to make the two servants who attended him there to go through the military exercises. He gave them titles and ranks, and then again degraded them, according to the whim of the moment. It was truly child's play, and a constant childhood. In general, indeed, he was very childish, although at this time he was sixteen. In 1744,

while the court was at Moscow, Catherine II. arrived there with her mother, on the 9th of February.

The Russian court was at that time divided into two great sections or parties. At the head of the first, which now began to recover from its previous depression, was the Vice-Chancellor Count Bestoujeff Rumine. He was a man far more feared than loved, excessively intriguing and suspicious, firm and resolute in his principles, not a little tyrannical, an implacable enemy, but a steady friend, never abandoning those who did not first turn their backs on him. He was, besides, difficult to get along with, and apt to stand upon trifles. He was at the head of the department of foreign affairs. Having to contend with those immediately about the Empress, he had been kept down before the journey to Moscow; but now he began to gain an ascendancy. He leaned to the court of Vienna, to that of Saxony, and to England. The arrival of Catherine II. and her mother give him no pleasure; it was the secret work of the faction opposed to him. The enemies of the Count were numerous, but he made them all tremble. He had over them the advantage of his position and character, which gave him great weight in the politics of the ante-chamber.

The party opposed to Bestoujeff were in favor of France, her protégée Sweden, and the king of Prussia. The Marquis de la Chétardie was the soul of this party; the courtiers from Holstein its prominent personages. They had gained over Lestocq, one of the principal actors in the revolution which had placed Elizabeth on the throne of Russia. He had a large share in her confidence. He had been her surgeon since the death of the Empress Catherine I., to whose household he had also been attached, and had rendered essential services to both mother and daughter. He was not wanting either in shrewdness, skill, or intrigue; but he was malicious, and had a bad heart. All these strangers supported him, and put forward Count Michael Woronzoff, who had also taken part in the revolution, and had accompanied Elizabeth on the night she ascended the throne. She had made him marry the niece of the Empress Catherine I., the Countess Anna Karlovna Skavronsky, who had been brought up with herself, and was very much attached to her. To

this faction also belonged the Count Alexander Roumianzoff, father of the Marshal, who had signed the peace of Abo with Sweden—a peace in which Bestoujeff had been but little consulted. The party also counted upon the Procurator-general Troubetzkoy, upon the whole Troubetzkoy family, and, consequently, upon the Prince of Hesse-Homburg, who had married a princess of this family. The Prince of Hesse-Homburg, who was much thought of at that time, was personally of little consequence, his importance being wholly derived from the extensive family to which his wife belonged, and of which the father and mother were still living: the latter enjoyed great consideration.

The remaining portion of those who were about the Empress consisted at that time of the family of Schouvaloff. These balanced in all respects the Master of the Hounds, Razoumowsky, who, for the moment, was the acknowledged favorite.

Count Bestoujeff knew how to make these latter useful, but his chief reliance was on the Baron Tcherkassoff, Secretary of the Cabinet to the Empress, and who had previously served in the cabinet of Peter I. He was a rough and headstrong man, an advocate of order and justice, and one who wished to see everything in due form and system. The remainder of the court took sides with one or other of these parties, according to their several interests or feelings.

The arrival of my mother and myself seemed to give the Grand Duke much pleasure. I was then in my fifteenth year. During the first few days he showed me great attention. Even then, and in that short time, I could see that he cared but little for the nation over which he was destined to rule; that he leaned to Lutheranism; that he had no affection for those about him; and that he was very childish. I was silent, and listened, and this gained me his confidence. I remember his telling me, among other things, that what most pleased him in me was, that I was his cousin, as he could therefore, from our near relationship, open his heart to me with entire confidence; and hereupon he went on to inform me that he was in love with one of the maids of honor to the Empress, who had been dismissed from court in consequence of the misfortune of her mother, a Madame Lapoukine, who had

been exiled to Siberia; that he would have been very glad to have married her, but that he was resigned to marry me instead, as his aunt wished it. I listened with a blush to these family disclosures, thanking him for his premature confidence; but, in reality, I was astounded at his imprudence and utter want of judgment in a variety of matters.

The tenth day after my arrival in Moscow, it was Saturday, the Empress went to the convent of Troïtza. The Grand Duke remained with us at Moscow. Three masters had already been assigned me: Simon Theodorsky, to instruct me in the Greek faith; Basil Adadouroff, for the Russian language; and the ballet-master, Laudé, for dancing. In order to make greater progress in the Russian, I used to sit up in bed when every one else was asleep, and learned by heart the lessons which Adadouroff had left me. As my room was warm, and I had no experience of the climate, I neglected to put on my shoes or stockings, but studied just as I left my bed. The consequence was, that from the fifteenth day I was seized with a pleurisy which threatened to kill me. It commenced with a shivering, which seized me on the Tuesday after the departure of the Empress for the convent of Troïtza, just as I had dressed for dinner. My mother and myself were to dine that day with the Grand Duke, and I had much difficulty in getting her to allow me to go to bed. On her return from dinner, she found me almost without consciousness, in a burning fever, and with an excruciating pain in the side. She fancied I was going to have the small-pox; sent for the physicians, and wished me to be treated in consequence. The medical men insisted on my being bled, but she would not listen to the proposal, saying that it was from being bled that her brother had died of the small-pox in Russia, and that she did not wish me to share the same fate. The physicians, and the attendants of the Grand Duke, who had not had the disease, sent to the Empress an exact report of the state of matters, and in the meantime, while my mother and the doctors were disputing, I lay in my bed, unconscious, in a burning fever, and with a pain in the side which occasioned intense suffering, and forced from me continual moanings, for which my mother scolded me, telling me that I ought to bear my sufferings patiently.

Finally, on the Saturday evening, at seven o'clock, that is, on the fifth day of my disease, the Empress returned from the convent at Troïtza, and, on alighting from her carriage, proceeded to my room, and found me without consciousness. She had with her Count Lestocq and a surgeon, and having heard the opinion of the physicians, she sat down at the head of my bed, and ordered me to be bled. The moment the blood came, I recovered my consciousness, and, opening my eyes, found myself in the arms of the Empress, who had lifted me up. For twenty-seven days I lay between life and death, and during that period I was bled sixteen times, on some occasions as often as four times in the day. My mother was scarcely ever allowed to enter my room. She continued opposed to these frequent bleedings, and loudly asserted that the doctors were killing me. She began, however, to believe that I should not have the small-pox. The Empress had placed the Countess Roumianzoff and several other ladies in attendance on me, and it seemed that my mother's judgment was distrusted. At last, under the care of the physician Sanches, a Portuguese, the abscess which had formed in my right side burst. I vomited it, and from that moment I began to recover. I soon perceived that my mother's conduct during my illness had lowered her in every one's estimation. When she saw me very bad, she wished a Lutheran clergyman to be brought to me. I have been told that they brought me to myself, or took advantage of a moment of returning consciousness, to propose this to me, and that I replied, "What is the good? I would rather have Simon Theodorsky; I will speak to him with pleasure." He was brought, and addressed me in a manner that gave general satisfaction. This occurrence did me great service in the opinion of the Empress and of the entire court.

As I began to get better, the Grand Duke often came to spend the evening in my mother's apartment, which was also mine. He and every one else seemed to take the greatest interest in my condition. The Empress had often shed tears about me. At last, on the 21st of April, 1744, my birthday, whence commenced my fifteenth year, I was able to appear in public for the first time after this severe illness.

In the month of July, the Empress celebrated, at Moscow,

the peace with Sweden. On this occasion, a Court was formed for me, as an affianced Grand Duchess of Russia; and, immediately after the celebration, the Empress sent us off for Kiev. She set out herself some days later. We made short stages—my mother and I, the Countess Roumianzoff, and one of the ladies of my mother's suite in one carriage; the Grand Duke, Brummer, Berkholz, and Decken in another. One afternoon, the Grand Duke, tired of being with his pedagogues, wished to join my mother and me. Once in with us, he would not leave our carriage. Then my mother, wearied with being always with him and me, took a fancy to augment our company. She communicated her idea to the young people of our suite, among whom were Prince Galitzine, since Marshal of this name, and Count Zachar Czernicheff. One of the carriages, containing our beds, was taken, benches were ranged all round it, and the next morning the Grand Duke, my mother and I, Prince Galitzine, Count Czernicheff, and one or two more of the youngest of the suite, entered it. And thus we passed the rest of our journey very gayly, as far as our carriage life was concerned; but all who were not with us protested against the arrangement. It extremely displeased the Grand Marshal Brummer, the Great Chamberlain Berkholz, the Countess Roumianzoff, the Lady-in-waiting on my mother, and, in fact, all the rest of the suite, because they were never admitted; and, while we laughed through the journey, they were grumbling and wearied.

In this manner we reached Koselsk, at the end of three weeks, and there remained three other weeks waiting for the Empress, who had been delayed on her route by several occurrences. We learnt at Koselsk that during her journey several persons of her suite had been sent into exile, and that she was in very bad humor. At last, about the middle of August, she reached Koselsk, and we remained there with her till the end of the month.

Having arrived at Moscow, the entire autumn was passed in dramatic representations, ballets, and court masquerades. In spite of all this, however, it was evident that the Empress was often in bad humor. One day while at the theater, my mother, the Grand Duke, and I, being in a box opposite her Majesty, I perceived the Empress speaking very warmly

and angrily to Count Lestocq. When she had ended, the Count left her and came to our box. Approaching me he said, "Have you seen how the Empress spoke to me?" I answered that I had. "Very well, then," he said; "she is very angry with you." "With me! and why?" I replied. "Because," he said, "you are much in debt. She says that wells may be dried up; that when she was a princess she had no greater allowance than you have, though she had an establishment to provide for; and that she took care not to get into debt, because she knew that no one would pay for her." All this he uttered in a dry tone and with an air of displeasure, apparently that the Empress might see from her box how he had executed his commission. Tears came into my eyes, and I was silent. Having finished what he had to say, the count departed. The Grand Duke, who was seated at my side, heard most of the conversation; and after questioning me relative to the remainder, he gave me to understand, rather by looks than words, that he agreed with his aunt and was not sorry I had been scolded. This was his general way of acting, and he fancied he should thus render himself agreeable to the Empress by entering into her views when she was angry with any one. My mother also, when she learnt what had happened, said it was only the natural consequence of the pains that had been taken to withdraw me from her control; and that since they had put me in a condition to act without consulting her, she should wash her hands of the matter. Thus they both took part against me.

As for me, I determined instantly to put my affairs into order; and the next morning I called for my accounts. From these I found that I was in debt to the amount of 17,000 roubles. Before leaving Moscow for Kiev, the Empress had sent me 15,000 roubles and a large chest of simple dresses; but it was necessary for me to be richly dressed, so that, everything reckoned, I owed 2,000 roubles, and this did not appear to me an unreasonable sum. Different causes had thrown me into these expenses.

In the first place, I had arrived in Russia very badly provided for. If I had three or four dresses in the world, it was the very outside; and this at a court where people changed their dress three times a day. A dozen chemises constituted

the whole of my linen, and I had to use my mother's sheets.

In the second place, I had been told that in Russia people liked presents; and that generosity was the best means of acquiring friends and making one's self agreeable.

Thirdly, they had placed with me the most extravagant woman in Russia, the Countess Roumianzoff, who was always surrounded with tradesmen, and constantly showing me a variety of things which she induced me to purchase, and which I often purchased merely to present them to her, as I knew she was eager to have them.

The Grand Duke also cost me not a little, for he was fond of presents.

Besides, I had found out that my mother's ill-humor was easily appeased by the present of anything that pleased her; and as she was often out of temper, and especially with me, I did not neglect this means of soothing her. Her ill-humor arose in part from her being on such a bad footing with the Empress, and from the fact that her Majesty often subjected her to annoyances and humiliations. Besides, heretofore, I had always followed her; and now she could not without displeasure see me take precedence of her. I carefully avoided doing so, whenever it was possible; but in public it could not be avoided. In general, I had made it a rule to pay her the greatest respect, and treat her with all possible deference; but it was of no use, she had always and on all occasions some disagreeable remark to make, a thing which did not do her much good or prepossess people in her favor.

The Countess Roumianzoff, by her scandals and gossipings, contributed much—as did many others—to prejudice my mother in the opinion of the Empress. That carriage for eight, during the journey to Kiev, had also much to do with this result. All the old had been excluded; all the young admitted. God only knows what was tortured out of this arrangement, harmless as it was in itself. What was most evident was, that it had displeased all those who by their rank were entitled to admission, but were, nevertheless, set aside for the sake of more amusing companions. But the real foundation of all this trouble was the exclusion of Betzky and the Troubetzkoys, in whom my mother had most confidence during the journey to Kiev. Brummer and the Coun-

tess Roumianzoff had also, no doubt, contributed to it; and the carriage for eight, into which they had not been admitted, was a source of rancor.

At last we reached St. Petersburg, and took up our residence in one of the houses attached to the court. The palace, at that time, was not sufficiently large to allow even the Grand Duke to reside there, so that he occupied a house situated between the palace and ours. My apartments were at the left of the palace, my mother's at the right. As soon as she saw this arrangement, she became angry: first, because she thought my rooms better situated than her own; secondly, because hers were separated from mine by a common hall. In point of fact, we each had four rooms, two in front and two facing the court-yard of the house. The rooms were equal in size, and furnished exactly alike, the furniture being blue and red. But what chiefly contributed to annoy my mother was the circumstance which I am going to mention. While we were at Moscow, the Countess Roumianzoff had brought me the plan of this house by direction of the Empress, forbidding me, in her name, to speak of the matter, and consulting me as to how my mother and myself should be respectively placed. There was no choice in the case, for the two sets of apartments were in all respects equal. I said so to the Countess, and she gave me to understand that the Empress preferred my having separate rooms to occupying, as at Moscow, the same apartments as my mother. This change pleased me also, for I was much inconvenienced in being with my mother, and, in fact, no one liked the arrangement.

My mother in some way got to hear of the plan that had been shown me. She spoke to me on the subject, and I told the simple truth, just as the matter had occurred. She scolded me for the secrecy I had maintained. I said I had been forbidden to speak; but she would not admit the validity of this reason, and altogether I saw that from day to day, she became more and more displeased with me, and, in fact, she had managed to quarrel with almost every one, so that she now scarcely ever came to table, either for dinner or supper, but was served in her own room. As for me, I went to her apartments three or four times a day. The rest of my time was spent in learning Russian, in playing on the

harpsichord, and in reading, for I had bought myself books; so that at fifteen I was retired, and tolerably studious for my age.

Towards the close of our stay at Moscow, a Swedish embassy arrived, at the head of which was the Senator Cedercreutz. A short time afterwards, the Count Gyllenburg also arrived, to announce to the Empress the marriage of the Prince of Sweden, my mother's brother, with a Swedish princess. Count Gyllenburg, and many other Swedes, became known to us at the time of the Prince Royal's departure for Sweden. He was a man of talent, no longer young, and my mother thought very highly of him. For myself, I was, in some respects, under obligations to him; for at Hamburg, seeing that my mother made little or no account of me, he told her she was wrong, and assured her that I was a child much beyond my age. On his arrival at St. Petersburg, he visited us, and as he had told me, while at Hamburg, that I had a very philosophical turn of mind, he asked me how it fared with my philosophy in the vortex in which I was placed. I told him how I passed my time in my room. He replied that a philosopher of fifteen could not know herself, and that I was surrounded by so many rocks that I ran great danger of being wrecked, unless the temper of my mind was of a very superior stamp; that I ought, therefore, to fortify it by the study of the best works, such as the Lives of Plutarch, that of Cicero, and the Causes of the Greatness and Decay of the Roman Republic, by Montesquieu. I immediately ordered those books to be procured for me, and there was considerable difficulty in finding them in St. Petersburg at that period. I told the Count that I would trace my portrait for him, such as I supposed it, that he might see whether or not I really did understand myself.

I did, in fact, trace out this portrait in writing, and gave it to him under the following title:—"A Portrait of the Philosopher of Fifteen." Many years afterwards, viz., in the year 1758, I turned up this portrait; and I was astonished at the accuracy and depth of self-knowledge which it evinced. Unfortunately I burnt it that same year, with all my other papers, fearing to keep a single one in my room, at the time of the unfortunate affair of Bestoujeff.

Count Gyllenburg returned my manuscript a few days afterwards. I do not know whether he took a copy. He accompanied it by some dozen pages of reflections which he had made relative to me. In these he endeavored to strengthen my character in firmness and elevation of mind, as well as in all the other qualities of the head and heart. I read his remarks again and again, many times. I impressed them on my mind, and determined very sincerely to follow his advice. I made a promise to myself that I would do so, and when once I have made a promise to myself, I do not remember ever having failed in keeping it. Finally, I returned the manuscript to the Count as he had requested, and I confess that it has been of great service to me in forming and strengthening my mind and character.

On the 9th of February, 1745, a year had passed since my arrival at the court of Russia. On the 10th, the Empress celebrated the birthday of the Grand Duke. He had now entered his seventeenth year. On this occasion, I dined with her Majesty. She dined upon the throne, and I was the only guest. The Grand Duke did not appear in public that day, nor for a long time afterwards; they were in no hurry to show him in the condition in which the small-pox had left him. The Empress was very gracious during dinner. She told me that the letters I had written to her in Russian, while she was at Chotilovo, had very much pleased her (to tell the truth, they were the composition of M. Adadouroff, though I had copied them out;) and she also said she had been informed that I took great pains to acquire the language of the country. She spoke to me in Russian, and wished me to reply to her in that language, which I did; and then she was pleased to praise my correct pronunciation. Finally, she told me that I had grown handsomer since my illness at Moscow. In fact, during the whole time of dinner, she was occupied in giving me marks of her kindness and affection. I returned home highly delighted with my dinner, and received congratulations on all sides.

In going to mass, or to the Empress, my mother and I had to pass through the apartments of the Grand Duke, which were situated near mine; we therefore often saw him. He also was in the habit of coming of an evening, to pass

some moments with me; but there was no eagerness in these visits. On the contrary, he was always glad of any excuse for dispensing with them, and remaining at home, occupied with the childish amusements already mentioned.

Both Prince Augustus and the old valet, the favorite of the Grand Duke, fearing, seemingly, my future influence, often talked to him about the manner in which he ought to treat his wife. Romberg, an old Swedish dragoon, told him that his wife dared not speak in his presence nor meddle with his affairs; and that if she only attempted to open her mouth even, he ordered her to hold her tongue; that he was master in his own house, and that it was disgraceful for a husband to allow himself to be weakly led about by his wife like a booby.

Now the Grand Duke had about as much discretion as a cannon ball, and, when his mind was full of anything, he could not rest until he had unburdened it to the persons he was in the habit of talking with, never for a moment considering to whom it was he spoke. Consequently he used to tell me all these things, with the utmost frankness, the first time he saw me afterwards. He always fancied that every one was of his opinion, and that nothing could be more reasonable than all this. I took good care not to speak of these things to any one; but they made me reflect very seriously upon the fate which awaited me. I determined to husband carefully the confidence of the Grand Duke, in order that he might at least consider me as a person of whom he felt sure, and to whom he could confide everything without the least inconvenience to himself; and in this I succeeded for a long time. Besides, I treated every one in the best way I could, and studied how to gain the friendship, or at least to lessen the enmity of those whom I in any way suspected of being badly disposed to me. I showed no leaning to any side, nor meddled with anything; always maintained a serene air, treated every one with great attention, affability, and politeness, and, as I was naturally very gay, I saw with pleasure that from day to day I advanced in the general esteem, and was looked upon as an interesting child, and one by no means wanting in mind. I showed great respect for my mother, a boundless obedience for the Empress,

and the most profound deference for the Grand Duke; and I sought with the most anxious care to gain the affection of the public.

The first week of Lent I had a singular scene with the Grand Duke. In the morning, while in my room with my maids, who were all very devout, listening to matins, which were sung in the ante-chamber, I received an embassy from the Grand Duke. He had sent me his dwarf to inquire how I was, and to tell me that, on account of its being Lent, he should not visit me that day. The dwarf found us all listening to the prayers, and fulfilling exactly the prescriptions of Lent, according to our creed. I returned the usual compliments to the Duke, through his dwarf, who then departed. When he got back, whether it was that he had really been edified by what he had seen, or that he wished his dear lord and master, who was anything but devout, to do the same, he passed a high eulogium upon the devotion which reigned in my apartments, and, by doing so, put the Duke in a very bad humor with me. The first time we met he began by sulking. Having asked the cause of this, he scolded me very much for what he called the excessive devotion to which I gave myself up. When I asked who had told him this, he named his dwarf as an eye-witness of it. I told him I did no more than was proper, only what every one else did, and what could not be dispensed with without scandal; but he thought differently. The dispute ended as most disputes do, by leaving each one with his own opinion; but, as his Imperial Highness had no one but me to speak to during mass, he gradually left off pouting.

One morning, some few days afterwards, I saw the Empress come into my room. She sent for my mother, and they retired to my dressing-room, where they had a long and private conversation; after which they returned into my bed-room, and I saw that my mother's eyes were red and filled with tears. I do not know what was the object of this conversation, but my mother seemed to conceive great hopes from it, and went away very well satisfied. As for me, I was in all this simply a spectator, and one, too, very passive, very discreet, and pretty nearly indifferent.

In the month of May, the Empress, with the Grand Duke,

went to occupy the Summer Palace. To my mother and me had been assigned a stone building, by the side of the Fontanka, close to the house of Peter I. My mother occupied one side of this building, and I the other. Here ended all the assiduities of the Grand Duke; he told me quite plainly, and through a servant, that he now lived too far off to come and see me often. I fully perceived his want of interest, and how little I was cared for. My self-esteem and vanity grieved in silence, but I was too proud to complain. I should have thought myself degraded if any one had shown me a friendship which I could have taken for pity. Nevertheless, I shed tears when alone, then quietly dried them up, and went to romp with my maids. My mother also treated me with great coldness and ceremony, but I never missed visiting her several times during the day. At heart I felt very sad, but I took care not to speak of this. However, Mademoiselle Joukoff one day perceived my tears, and spoke to me on the subject. I gave her the best reasons I could, without however giving her the true ones. I labored more earnestly than before to gain the affection of every one. Great or small, I neglected no one, but laid it down to myself as a rule to believe that I stood in need of every one, and so to act in consequence as to obtain the good will of all; and I succeeded in doing so.

My mother took advantage of the absences of the Empress to go and sup at the neighboring mansions, and especially at that of the Prince and Princess of Hesse-Homburg. One evening when she had ridden out there, I was sitting, after supper, in my room, which was on a level with the garden, one of the doors leading into it, when I felt tempted by the fine weather. I proposed to my maids and my three ladies of honor to take a walk in the garden; and I had no great trouble in persuading them. We were eight, and my valet, who made nine, followed us with two other valets. We walked about till midnight in the most innocent manner possible. My mother having returned, Mademoiselle Schenck, who had refused to accompany us, and grumbled at our project, was in a great hurry to tell her that I had gone out against her advice. My mother went to bed, and when I got back with my troop, Mademoiselle Schenck told me,

with an air of triumph, that my mother had sent twice to inquire if I had returned, as she wished to speak to me; but that as it was very late, and she tired of waiting, she had gone to bed. I would have instantly gone to her, but I found the door closed. I told Schenck that she might have had me called. She pretended that she had not been able to find us; but this was a mere story to make a quarrel, and get me scolded; I saw this clearly, and went to bed with a good deal of uneasiness.

The following day, as soon as I awoke, I went to my mother and found her in bed. I approached to kiss her hand, but she angrily withdrew it, and gave me a dreadful scolding for having dared to walk out at night without her permission. I said she was not at home; but she replied that the hour was improper, and said all sorts of disagreeable things, for the purpose, seemingly, of giving me a distaste for nocturnal promenades. This, however, is certain, that although this walk may have been an imprudence, nothing could have been more innocent. What most distressed me was, that she accused me of having gone up to the apartments of the Grand Duke. I replied that this was an abominable calumny, at which she became so enraged that she seemed out of herself. It was in vain that I went on my knees to soothe her irritation. She treated my submission as acting, and ordered me out of the room. I retired to my own apartments in tears. At dinner-time I ascended with her, she still being very angry, to the apartments of the Grand Duke, who inquired what was the matter, as my eyes were very red. I told him exactly what had happened. This time he took my part, and accused my mother of being capricious and passionate. I begged him not to speak to her on the subject, which request he complied with, and by degrees her anger wore off; but I was always treated very coldly. We left Peterhoff at the end of July, and returned to the city, where all was preparation for the approaching marriage.

At last the Empress fixed the 21st of August for the ceremony. As the day came nearer, I became more and more melancholy. My heart predicted but little happiness; ambition alone sustained me. In my inmost soul there was a something which never allowed me to doubt for a single mo-

ment that sooner or later I should become the sovereign Empress of Russia in my own right.

On the third day after my marriage, the Countess Roumianzoff sent me word that the Empress had dispensed with her attendance on me, and that she was going to return home to her husband and children. This did not grieve me much, for she had been the cause of a great deal of scandal.

The marriage festivities lasted ten days, at the end of which the Grand Duke and myself took up our residence in the Summer Palace, where the Empress was living; and the departure of my mother was beginning to be talked of. Since my marriage I did not see her every day; but she had very much softened towards me. About the latter end of September she took her departure, the Grand Duke and I accompanying her as far as Krasnoe-Selo. I was sincerely afflicted, and wept a great deal.

At the Winter Palace, the Grand Duke and I occupied the apartments which we had previously used; those of the Duke were separated from mine by an immense staircase, which also led to the apartments of the Empress. In going to him, or in his coming to me, it was necessary to cross the landing of this staircase—not the pleasantest thing in the world, especially in winter. Nevertheless, we made the passage several times a day. In the evening, I went to play at billiards in his ante-chamber with the Chamberlain Berkholz, while he romped with his gentlemen in the other room. My party at billiards was interrupted by the retirement of Brummer and Berkholz, whom the Empress dismissed from attendance on the Grand Duke, at the end of the winter of 1746. This winter was passed in masquerades given at the principal houses in the city, which were then very small. The court and the whole town assisted at them with great regularity.

Although the room in which the Grand Duke was placed adjoined mine, I never entered it except when I felt that I should not be in the way, for I saw that he did not care much to have me there, but preferred being with his attendants, who, on the other hand, did not much suit me. Besides, I was not much accustomed to pass my time alone among a set of men. Meanwhile, Lent came round. I went to my duty (*fis*

mes dévotions) [1] the first week. Generally speaking, I was inclined to devotion at that period. I saw plainly that the Grand Duke cared little about me. A fortnight after our marriage he confessed to me again that he was in love with Mademoiselle Carr, Maid of Honor to her Imperial Majesty, since married to a Prince Galitzine, Equery to the Empress. He told Count Devier, his Chamberlain, that there was no comparison between that lady and me. Devier maintained the contrary, and the Duke got angry with him. This scene took place almost in my presence, and I witnessed their contest. Surely, I said to myself, it would be impossible for me not to be unhappy with such a man as this, were I to give way to sentiments of tenderness thus requited. I might die of jealousy without benefit to any one. I endeavored therefore to master my feelings, so as not to be jealous of a man who did not love me. Had he wished to be loved, I should have found no difficulty in loving him. I was naturally well disposed, and accustomed to fulfill my duties; but then, too, I should have required a husband who had common sense, which this one had not.

After Easter, he had a marionette theater set up in his room, and invited company to see it, and even ladies. This show was the most insipid thing imaginable. The room in which it was set up had a door which was fastened up, in consequence of its leading into one of the Empress' apartments. In this apartment there was a mechanical table, which could be lowered and raised so as to admit of dining without servants. One day, while the Grand Duke was in his room preparing his so-called theatricals, he heard people talking in this room beyond, and, with his usual inconsiderate vivacity, he took up from his theater one of those carpenters' tools used for making holes in boards, and set to work boring holes in this condemned door, so that he could see all that passed within, and among other things, the dinner which the Empress was then taking there. The Master of the Hounds, Count Razoumowsky, in a brocaded dressing-gown, dined with her—he had taken medicine that day—and there were, besides, some dozen persons of those most in the confidence of the Empress. The Grand Duke, not content with enjoying

[1] That is, went to confession and communion.

the fruit of his skillful labor himself, must needs call all who were about him to share in the pleasure of looking through the holes which he had bored with so much diligence. When all were fully satisfied with this indiscreet pleasure, he came and invited Madame Krause, myself, and my maids, to go to his room and see something which we had never seen before. He did not tell us what it was, doubtless to give us an agreeable surprise. As I did not hurry myself sufficiently to gratify his impatience, he led away Madame Krause and my women. I arrived last, and found them stationed in front of this door, where he had placed benches, chairs, and stools, for the accommodation of the spectators, as he said. On entering, I asked what all this was about. He ran to meet me, and told me what the case was. I was terrified and indignant at his rashness, and told him I would neither look nor have anything to do with this impropriety, which would certainly bring him into trouble if his aunt should come to hear of it, and this she could not well help doing, seeing that there were at least twenty persons in his secret.

Up to the Sunday, we heard nothing of this affair; but on that day it happened, I hardly know how, that I got to mass rather later than usual. On returning to my room, I was about taking off my court dress, when I saw the Empress enter with a flushed and angry look. She kissed me, desired the Grand Duke to be sent for, and, while waiting for him, scolded me for being late at mass, and preferring my own adornment to the services of God. When she had ended with him, the Grand Duke, who had undressed in his own room, entered in his dressing-gown, with his night cap in his hand, and with a gay and careless air. He ran to kiss the hand of the Empress, who embraced him, and then asked him how he had dared to act in the manner he had done, adding that she had gone into the room which contained the mechanical table, and found the door all pierced with holes, all these holes being directed towards the place where she usually sat; that he seemed to have forgotten what he owed her; that she could no longer consider him as anything but an ungrateful person; that her father, Peter I., had also an ungrateful son, and that he punished him by disinheriting him; that, in the time of the Empress Anne, she had never failed in giving

her the respect due to a crowned head, anointed of the Lord; that the Empress Anne did not understand jokes, but sent to the Fortress those who were wanting in respect; that as for him, he was but a little boy, and she would teach him how to behave. At this he began to get angry, and would have answered her, stammering out a few words to this effect, but she commanded him to be silent, and became so excited that her anger knew no bounds, as was usually the case when she got into a passion. She loaded him with insults, and said all sorts of shocking things, treating him with as much contempt as anger.

We were thunderstruck, and although this scene did not refer directly to me, yet tears came into my eyes. She perceived this, and said to me, "This does not apply to you; I know that you had nothing to do with this act, and that you neither looked nor wished to look through the door." The Grand Duke went to his room, and I undressed in silence, ruminating on what I had heard. When I had done, the Duke returned, and said to me—in a tone half sheepish, half comical—"She was like a fury, and did not know what she said." "She was dreadfully angry," I replied. We talked over the matter, and then dined in my room, quite alone. When the Grand Duke had gone to his own apartments, Madame Krause entered my room. "It must be acknowledged," she said, "that the Empress has acted like a true mother to-day." I saw she wished to make me talk, and therefore I said nothing. She continued: "A mother gets angry, scolds her children, and there the matter ends; you ought both of you to have said to her, *I beg your pardon, Madame,* and you would have disarmed her." I said I was astounded and petrified by her Majesty's anger, and all I could do at the moment was to listen and be silent. She then left me, probably to make her report. As for me, the *"I beg your pardon, Madame,"* as a means of disarming the anger of the Empress, remained in my head; and I have since used it with success, when occasion required, as will be seen in the sequel.

In the month of May we moved to the Summer Palace. At the end of the month the Empress placed with me, as chief housekeeper, Madame Tchoglokoff, one of her maids of honor,

and her relative. This was a thunderbolt for me. This lady was altogether in the interest of Count Bestoujeff, extremely silly, spiteful, capricious, and very selfish. Her husband, Chamberlain to the Empress, was then gone on some sort of mission from her Majesty to Vienna. I wept a great deal on seeing her arrive, and all the rest of the day. I was to be bled on the following day. In the morning the Empress came to my room, and seeing my eyes red, said to me that young women who did not love their husbands were always crying; that my mother, however, had assured her I had no repugnance to marrying the Grand Duke; that, besides, she had not forced me; that, as I was married, I must not cry any more. I remembered the instructions of Madame Krause, and said to her, *I beg your pardon, Madame,* and she was appeased. Meanwhile, the Grand Duke came in, and this time the Empress received him very graciously, and then went away. I was bled, and indeed I required it; I then went to bed, and wept the whole day. The next day, the Grand Duke drew me aside in the course of the afternoon, and I saw clearly that they had given him to understand that Madame Tchoglokoff had been placed with me because I did not love him. But I cannot understand how they expected to increase my attachment for him by giving me that woman; and so I told him.

In the country, the Grand Duke formed a pack of hounds, and began to train dogs himself. When tired of tormenting these, he set to work scraping on the violin. He did not know a note, but he had a good ear, and made the beauty of music consist in the force and violence with which he drew forth the tones of his instrument. Those who had to listen to him, however, would often have been glad to stop their ears had they dared, for his music grated on them dreadfully. This course of life continued not only in the country, but also in town. On returning to the Winter Palace, Madame Krause—who had all along been an Argus—moderated so far as often even to aid in deceiving the Tchoglokoffs, who were hated by every one. She did more: she procured for the Grand Duke playthings—puppets, and such like childish toys, of which he was passionately fond. During the day, they were concealed within, or under my bed; the Grand Duke retired immediately after supper, and as soon as we were in bed Madame Krause

locked the door, and then the Grand Duke played with his puppets till one or two o'clock in the morning.

To procure for himself more amusement during the winter, the Duke had five or six hounds brought from the country, and placed them behind a wooden partition which separated the alcove of my bed-room from a large vestibule behind our apartments. As the alcove was separated only by boards, the odor of the kennel penetrated into it; and in the midst of this disgusting smell we both slept. When I complained to him of the inconvenience, he told me it was impossible to help it. The kennel being a great secret, I put up with this nuisance, rather than betray his Imperial Highness.

One day, while at Perova, I was seized with a headache so violent that I do not remember ever having had anything like it in my life. The excessive pain brought on violent sickness. I threw up repeatedly, and every movement in my room made me worse. I remained in this state for nearly four-and-twenty hours, and then fell asleep. The next day I felt nothing but weakness. Madame Tchoglokoff took all possible care of me during this severe attack. Generally speaking, all the persons who had been placed about me by an ill-will the most unequivocal, began in a short time to take an involuntary interest in me; and, when they were not interfered with or stimulated anew, they used to act against the principles of their employers, and yield to the impulse which attracted them towards me, or rather to the interest with which I inspired them. They never found me sulky or peevish, but always ready to meet the slightest advance on their part. In all this my natural gayety was of great service to me, for all these Arguses were often amused with my conversation, and relaxed in spite of themselves. . . .

On the 15th of December we left Moscow for St. Petersburg, traveling night and day in an open sledge. About midway I was again seized with a violent toothache. Notwithstanding this, the Grand Duke would not consent to close the sledge: scarcely would he allow me to draw the curtain a little, so as to shelter me from a cold and damp wind, blowing right into my face. At last we reached Zarskoe-Selo, where the Empress had already arrived, having passed us on the road, according to her usual custom. As soon as I stepped out of

the sledge I entered the apartment destined for us, and sent for her Majesty's physician Boërhave, the nephew of the celebrated Boërhave, requesting him to have the tooth which had tormented me so much for the last four or five months extracted. He consented with great reluctance, and only because I absolutely insisted on it. At last he sent for Gyon, my surgeon: I sat on the ground, Boërhave on one side, Tchoglokoff on the other, and Gyon drew the tooth; but the moment he did so, my eyes, nose and mouth became fountains, whence poured out—from my mouth, blood, from my eyes and nose water. Boërhave, who was a man of clear and sound judgment, instantly exclaimed, "Clumsy!" and calling for the tooth, he added, "I feared it would be so, and that was why I did not wish it to be drawn." Gyon, in extracting the tooth, had carried away with it a portion of the lower jaw, to which it was attached. At this moment the Empress came to the door of my room, and I was afterwards told that she was moved even to tears. I was put to bed, and suffered a great deal during four weeks, even in the city, whither we went next day, notwithstanding all this, and still in open sleighs.

I did not leave my room till the middle of January, 1750, for the lower part of my cheek still bore, in blue and yellow stains, the impression of the five fingers of M. Gyon. On new-year's day this year wishing to have my hair dressed, I noticed that the young man who was to do it, a Kalmuck whom I had trained for this purpose, was excessively red, and his eyes very piercing. I asked what was the matter, and learned that he had a very bad headache and great heat. I sent him away, desiring him to go to bed, for indeed he was not fit to do anything. He retired, and in the evening I was informed that the small-pox had broken out upon him. I escaped with nothing worse than the fright which this gave me, for I did not catch the disease, although he had combed my hair.

On the Wednesday evening I was to take a bath at the house of Madame Tchoglokoff, but on Tuesday evening she came to my room, and told the Grand Duke, who was with me, that it was her Majesty's pleasure that he also should take a bath. Now the baths, and all other Russian customs and

habits, were not simply disagreeable to the Duke, he had a mortal hatred for them. He therefore unceremoniously declared that he would do nothing of the kind. She, who was equally obstinate, and had no kind of reserve or ceremony in her speech, told him that this was an act of disobedience to her Imperial Majesty. He maintained that he ought not to be required to do what was repugnant to his nature; that he knew that the bath, in which he had never been, was unsuitable to his constitution; that he did not want to die; that life was the thing he held most dear, and that her Majesty should never compel him to go into the bath. Madame Tchoglokoff replied that her Majesty would know how to punish his disobedience. At this he became angry, and exclaimed, passionately, "I should like to see what she can do; I am not a child." Madame Tchoglokoff threatened that the Empress would send him to the Fortress. At this he cried bitterly; and they went on answering each other in the most outrageous terms that passion could dictate; in fact, they both acted as if they had not between them a grain of common sense.

At last, Madame Tchoglokoff departed, saying that she would report the conversation to her Imperial Majesty word for word. She returned presently with an entirely different theme, for she came to inform us that her Imperial Majesty was very angry that we had no children, and wished to know which of us was in fault; that she would therefore send a midwife to me, and a physician to the Grand Duke. To this she added various other outrageous remarks—remarks which had neither head nor tail, and concluded by saying that her Majesty had dispensed with our going to our duty this week, because the Grand Duke said the bath was injurious to his health. I must state that during these two conversations I never once opened my lips; in the first place, because they both spoke with such vehemence that I could find no chance of putting in a word; secondly, because I saw that both of them were utterly unreasonable. I do not know what view the Empress took of the matter, but, at all events, nothing more was said on either topic.

About mid-Lent, her Majesty went to Gostilitza, to the residence of Count Razoumowsky, to celebrate his feast, and we

were sent, together with her maids of honor and our ordinary suite, to Zarskoe-Selo. The weather was wonderfully mild, even warm, so that, on the 17th of March, instead of there being snow on the road, there was dust. Having established ourselves at Zarskoe-Selo, the Grand Duke and Tchoglokoff recommenced their hunting; I and the ladies walked or drove out as long as we could, and in the evening we all played at various small games. Here the Grand Duke manifested a decided partiality for the Princess of Courland, especially when he had been drinking in the evening—a thing which happened every day. He was always at her side, and spoke to no one but her. At last this thing went on in the most glaring manner, before my eyes, and before every one, so that my vanity and self-love began to be shocked at finding myself slighted for the sake of a little deformed creature like this. One evening, on rising from the table, Madame Vladislava said to me that every one was disgusted to see this little hunchback preferred to me. "It cannot be helped," I said, as the tears started to my eyes. I went to bed; scarcely was I asleep when the Grand Duke also came to bed. As he was tipsy, and knew not what he was doing, he spoke to me for the purpose of expatiating on the eminent qualities of his favorite. To check his garrulity as soon as possible, I pretended to be fast asleep. He spoke still louder in order to wake me, but finding that I still slept, he gave me two or three rather hard blows in the side with his fist; then, growling at the heaviness of my slumbers, he turned on his side and dropped asleep himself. I wept long and bitterly that night, as well on account of the matter itself, and the blows he had given me, as on that of my general situation, which was in all respects as disagreeable as it was wearisome. In the morning, the Duke seemed ashamed of what he had done; he did not speak of it, and I acted as if I had not felt anything. Two days afterwards we returned to town. The last week of Lent we recommenced our preparations for going to our duty. Nothing more was said to the Duke about the bath.

Another occurrence took place this week which perplexed him a little. While in his room he was nearly always in constant movement of one sort or other. One afternoon he was exercising himself in cracking an immense coachman's whip,

which he had had made for him. He whipped about right and left, and made his valets jump from one corner to another, fearing to come in for a chance slash. At last he somehow contrived to give himself a severe blow on the cheek. The mark extended all along the left side of his face, and the blow was severe enough to make the blood start. He was very much disturbed, fearing that he should not be able to go out even by Easter; that the Empress should again forbid him to communicate, as his face was bloody; and that when she came to learn the cause of the accident, he should get some disagreeable reprimand for his whipping amusements. He instantly ran to consult me, as he always did in such emergencies. Seeing him enter with his cheek all bloody, I exclaimed, "Good heavens! what has happened to you?" He told me. Having thought a little, I said, "Well, perhaps I can manage the matter for you; but, first of all, go to your room, and try if possible to prevent your cheek from being seen by any one. I will come to you as soon as I have got what I want, and I trust we shall so manage that no one will be the wiser."

He went off, and I recollected a preparation which had served me some years before in a similar predicament. I had a fall in the garden at Peterhoff, and took the skin off my face so that it bled; my surgeon Gyon gave me some white lead in the form of pomade, and I covered the wound with it, and went out as usual, without any one having perceived that I had scratched myself. I now sent for this pomade, and having received it, I went to the Grand Duke, and dressed his face so well, that he could not detect anything himself by looking in the glass. On the Thursday we received the communion, in company with the Empress, in the great church of the court, and then returned to our places. The light fell on the Grand Duke's cheek. Tchoglokoff approached for some purpose or other, and looking at the Duke, said, "Wipe your cheek, there is some pomatum on it." Instantly, as if in jest, I said to the Grand Duke, "And I, who am your wife, forbid your doing it." The Grand Duke, turning to Tchoglokoff, said, "See how these women treat us; we dare not even wipe our faces, if they do not like it." Tchoglokoff laughed, saying, "Well, this is indeed a woman's caprice!" The mat-

ter rested there, and the Duke felt grateful to me as well for the pomade which had spared him unpleasant results, as for my presence of mind, which had prevented all suspicion even in the case of M. Tchoglokoff.

As I had to be up before daylight on Easter morning I went to bed about five o'clock in the afternoon of Holy Saturday, intending to sleep till the time arrived for dressing. Scarcely had I got into bed when the Duke came running in in a violent hurry, telling me to make haste and get up to eat some fresh oysters, which had just been brought to him from Holstein. This was a great and double treat for him; first, because he was fond of oysters, and, secondly, because they came from Holstein, his native country, for which he had a great love, though he did not govern it any the better for that; for he both did, and was made to do, terrible things in it, as will be seen in the sequel. Not to get up would have been to disoblige him, and risk a serious quarrel; I therefore rose, dressed myself, and went to his apartments, though I was very much fatigued by the devotional exercises of the Holy Week. When I reached his room, I found the oysters served. Having eaten a dozen of them, I was allowed to return to bed, while he continued his repast. Indeed, he was all the better pleased by my not eating too many, as there were more left for himself, for he was excessively greedy in the matter of oysters. At midnight I got up, and dressed myself for the matins and mass of Easter Sunday; but I could not remain till the end of the service, for I was seized with a violent colic. I never remember having had such severe pains. I returned to my room with no one but the Princess Gagarine, all my people being in church. She assisted me to undress and get into bed, and sent for the doctors. I took medicine, and kept my bed during the first two days of the festival.

From the Summer Palace we went to Peterhoff, where, this year, we resided at Monplaisir. We regularly spent a portion of our afternoons at the residence of Madame Tchoglokoff, where, as there was always company, we were tolerably well amused. From Peterhoff we went to Oranienbaum, where we hunted whenever the weather permitted, being sometimes thirteen hours a day in the saddle. The summer, however, was

rather wet. I remember one day, when returning home quite wet, that, as I was dismounting, I met my tailor, who said to me, "When I see you in this condition, I am not at all surprised that I can scarcely keep you in riding habits, and that new ones are continually required." The only material I wore for this purpose was silk camlet. The rain made it split, the sun faded the colors, so that I was obliged to have a constant succession of new habits.

It was during this time that I contrived for myself saddles on which I could sit in any way I pleased. They had the English crook, and yet the leg could be passed over, so as to ride like a man. Besides, the crook divided, and a second stirrup could be let down or raised at pleasure. If the equeries were asked how I was mounted, they said, "Upon a lady's saddle," according to the wishes of the Empress. I never passed my leg over except I felt quite sure of not being betrayed; and as I made no boast of my invention, while, besides, my attendants were anxious to please me, no inconvenience resulted. The Grand Duke cared very little how I was mounted, while the equeries thought I ran less risk in riding astride, especially as I was constantly in the chase, than I did in sitting on the English saddles, which they detested, as they were always apprehensive of some accident, the blame of which they would, in all probability, have to bear. For myself, I cared little for the chase, but I was passionately fond of riding; and the more violent the exercise, the more I liked it, so that if a horse happened to run away, I was sure to be after it and bring it back. At that period, also, I had always a book in my pocket, and if I had a moment to myself, I spent it in reading.

I noticed, in these huntings, that M. Tchoglokoff became a good deal softened in his manners, especially towards me. This made me fear that he might take it into his head to pay his court to me—a thing which would not have suited me in any manner. In the first place, I did not at all like him. He was fair and foppish, very stout, and as heavy in mind as in body. He was universally hated while he was in no respect agreeable. His wife's jealousy and his own malignity were equally to be feared, especially for one like me, who had nothing in the world to depend on but myself and my merit, if I

had any. I therefore evaded, and very skillfully, I fancy, all the attentions of M. Tchoglokoff, without ever giving him any room for charging me with a want of politeness. All this was perfectly seen through by his wife, who felt grateful for it, and subsequently became much attached to me, partly, as will be seen in the sequel, from this cause.

The family of Soltikoff was one of the oldest and noblest in the empire. It was even allied to the imperial family through the mother of the Empress Anne, who was a Soltikoff, but of a different branch to the one in question; while M. Biren, created Duke of Courland by the favor of the Empress Anne, was the son of a petty farmer on the estate of a gentleman in Courland. The name of this farmer was Biren; but the favor enjoyed by the son in Russia induced the Birons of France, at the persuasion of Cardinal Fleury, to acknowledge him; for Fleury, anxious to gain over the court of Russia, favored the views and vanity of Biren, Duke of Courland.

On arriving in town, we learnt that besides the two days a week set apart for French plays, there would also be, twice a week, a masquerade ball. The Grand Duke added another day for concerts in his own apartments, and on Sundays there was generally a court. One of these masquerade days was for the court exclusively, and for those whom the Empress thought proper to admit; the other was for all the titled people who happened to be in the city, down to the rank of colonel, as well as those who served as officers in the guards. Sometimes, also, the whole of the nobility and the most considerable of the merchants were admitted. The court balls did not exceed 160 to 200 people; those called public received as many as 800.

When we were at Moscow, in the year 1744, the Empress took a fancy to have the court masquerades so arranged that all the men should dress as women, and all the women as men, no masks being worn. It was precisely a court day metamorphosed. The men wore large whaleboned petticoats, with women's gowns, and the head-dresses worn on court days, while the women appeared in the court costume of men. The men did not like these reversals of their sex, and the greater part of them were in the worst possible humor on these oc-

casions, because they felt themselves to be hideous in such disguises. The women looked like scrubby little boys, whilst the more aged amongst them had thick short legs, which were anything but ornamental. The only woman who looked really well, and completely a man, was the Empress herself. As she was very tall and somewhat powerful, male attire suited her wonderfully well. She had the handsomest leg I have ever seen with any man, and her foot was admirably proportioned. She danced to perfection, and everything she did had a special grace, equally so whether she dressed as a man or as a woman. One always felt inclined to be looking at her, and turned away with regret because there was no object that could replace her. At one of these balls I watched her while dancing a minuet. After she had ended it she came to me. I took the liberty of saying that it was very fortunate for the women she was not a man, and that her portrait alone, painted as she then was, would be enough to turn many a head. She received my compliment in very good part, and answered me in the same style, saying, in the most gracious manner possible, "That were she a man, it would be to me that she would give the apple." I stooped to kiss her hand for a compliment so unexpected. She embraced me, and every one was curious to know what had passed between us. I made no secret of it to M. Tchoglokoff, who whispered it to two or three others, and thus it passed from mouth to mouth until, in about a quarter of an hour, everybody knew it.

PART II

(1751)

At the beginning of the year 1751 the Grand Duke, who, like myself, felt great esteem and affection for the Count de Bernis, Ambassador from the Court of Vienna, determined to consult him relative to the state of his affairs in Holstein, to the debts which burdened that country, and the negotiations opened by Denmark, to which he had consented to listen. He desired me also to mention the subject to the Count. I said I would not fail to do so, since it was his wish. On the occasion of the next masquerade ball, therefore, I approached Count de Bernis, who was standing near the balustrade, within

which the dance was going on, and told him that the Grand Duke had ordered me to speak to him respecting the affairs of Holstein. The Count listened to me with great interest and attention. I told him frankly that being young and without advisers, having probably also but inaccurate notions of business affairs, and no experience to advance in my favor, my ideas, such as they were, were my own; that I might be very deficient in information, but that it appeared to me, in the first place, that the affairs of Holstein were not so desperate as some sought to represent them; that, besides, as to the exchange itself, I could very well understand that it might be more advantageous to Russia than to the Grand Duke personally; that assuredly, as heir to the throne, the interests of the empire ought to be dear to him; that if for these interests it was necessary to abandon Holstein in order to put an end to interminable discussions with Denmark, then the only question would be to choose, before giving it up, a favorable moment for the surrender; that to me the present time did not appear to be such, either as regarded the interest or personal credit of the Grand Duke; that, however, a time might come when circumstances would render this act more important and more creditable to him, and, perhaps, also more advantageous for the empire of Russia itself; but that at present the whole affair had a manifest air of intrigue, which, if it proved successful, would give an impression of feebleness on the part of the Grand Duke, from which he might suffer all his life in the estimation of the public; that it was but a few days, so to speak, since he had undertaken the management of that country; that he was extremely fond of the country, and yet, notwithstanding all this, he had been persuaded to exchange it, without very well knowing why, for the territory of Oldenburg, with which he was not at all acquainted, and which was still farther off from Russia; and that, besides, the port of Kiel, if in the hands of the Grand Duke, might be important for Russian navigation.

The Count de Bernis entered into all my reasonings, and said, in conclusion, "As Ambassador, I have no instructions on this matter, but as Count Bernis, I think you are right." The Grand Duke told me afterwards that the Ambassador said to him, "All I can say to you in this matter is, that I

think your wife is right, and that you will do well to listen to her.'' The Grand Duke consequently cooled very much upon the subject, and this, probably, was noticed, for it began to be mentioned to him more rarely.

During this summer Madame Tchoglokoff conceived such a special and real affection for me, that on our return to the capital she could not do without me, and was quite *ennuyée* when I was not with her. The cause of this affection arose from my not responding to the advances which it had pleased her husband to make to me—a circumstance which gave me a peculiar merit in the eyes of his wife. When we returned to the Winter Palace, Madame Tchoglokoff invited me almost every evening to her rooms. There were not many people there, but always more than in my room, where I sat quite alone reading, except when the Grand Duke came in to walk up and down at a rapid pace, talking about things which interested himself, but which had no value in my eyes. These promenades would last one or two hours, and were repeated several times a day. I was obliged to walk with him till my strength was quite exhausted, to listen with attention, and to answer him, though, for the most part, what he said had neither head nor tail; for he often gave the reins to his imagination. I remember that, during one whole winter, he was taken up with a project of building, near to Oranienbaum, a pleasure-house in the form of a convent of Capuchins, where he and I and all his suite should be dressed as Capuchins. This dress he thought charming and convenient. Every one was to have a donkey, and, in his turn, take this donkey and fetch water and bring provisions to the so-called convent. He used to laugh till he was ready to drop at the idea of the admirable and amusing effects which this invention was to produce. He made me draw a pencil-sketch of the plan of this precious work, and every day I had to add or remove something. However determined I was to comply with his humors, and bear everything with patience, I frankly avow that I was very often worn out with the annoyance of these visits, promenades, and conversations, which were insipid beyond anything I have ever seen. When he was gone, the most tiresome book appeared a delightful amusement.

Towards the end of autumn, the balls for the court and

the public recommenced, as did also the rage for splendor and refinement in masquerade dresses. Count Zachar Czernicheff returned to St. Petersburg. As, on the ground of old acquaintance, I always treated him very well, it rested only with myself to give what interpretation I pleased to his attentions this time. He began by telling me that I had grown much handsomer. It was the first time in my life that anything of the kind had been said to me. I did not take it ill. Nay, more; I was credulous enough to believe that he spoke the truth. At every ball there was some fresh remark of this kind. One day, the Princess Gagarine brought me a device from him, and, on breaking it, I preceived that it had been opened and gummed together again. The motto, as usual, was printed, but it consisted of a couple of verses, very tender and full of sentiment. After dinner, I had some devices brought to me. I looked for a motto which might serve as an answer, without compromising myself. I found one, put it into a device representing an orange, and gave it to the Princess Gagarine, who delivered it to Count Czernicheff. Next morning she brought me another from him; but this time I found a motto of some lines, in his own hand. I answered it, and there we were in regular and quite sentimental correspondence.

At the next masquerade, while dancing with him, he said he had a thousand things to tell me which he could not trust to paper, nor put in a device, which the Princess Gagarine might break in her pocket or lose on the way; and he entreated me to grant him a moment's audience either in my chamber, or wherever I might deem suitable. I told him that that was an utter impossibility, that my rooms were inaccessible, and that it was also impossible for me to leave them. He told me that he would, if necessary, disguise himself as a servant; but I refused point-blank, and so the matter went no farther than this secret correspondence by means of devices. At last the Princess Gagarine began to suspect its character, scolded me for making use of her, and would not receive any more of these missives.

(1752)

Amid these occurrences the year 1751 came to a close, and 1752 began. At the end of the Carnival, Count Czernicheff left to join his regiment. A few days before his departure I required to be bled; it was on a Saturday. The following Wednesday, M. Tchoglokoff invited me to his island, at the mouth of the Neva. He had a house there, consisting of a saloon in the center and some chambers on the sides. Near this house he had some slides prepared. On arriving, I found there the Count Roman Voronzoff, who, on seeing me, said, "I have just the thing for you; I have had an excellent little sledge made for the slides." As he had often taken me before, I accepted his offer, and the sledge was at once brought. In it was a kind of small fauteuil, on which I seated myself. He placed himself behind me, and we began to descend; but about half-way down the incline, the Count was no longer master of the sledge, and it overturned. I fell, and the Count, who was heavy and clumsy, fell on me, or rather on my left arm, in which I had been bled some four or five days before. We got up, and walked towards one of the court sledges, which was in waiting for those who descended to convey them back to the point from which they had started, so that any who wished might recommence the descent.

While sitting in this sledge with the Princess Gagarine, who, with Prince Ivan Czernicheff, had followed me, the latter, together with Voronzoff, standing behind the sleigh, I felt a sensation of warmth spreading over my left arm, the cause of which I could not make out. I passed my right hand into the sleeve of my pelisse to see what was the matter, and having withdrawn it, I found it covered with blood. I told the Count and the Princess that I thought my vein had reopened. They made the sleigh move faster, and instead of going again to the slides, we went to the house. There we found no one but a butler. I took off my pelisse, the butler gave me some vinegar, and Count Czernicheff performed the office of surgeon. We all agreed not to say a word about this adventure. As soon as my arm was set to rights, we returned to the slides. I danced the rest of the evening, then supped, and we returned home very late, without any one having the least idea of what

had happened to me. However, the skin did not join smoothly for nearly a month; but it got all right by degrees.

After Easter we went to the Summer Palace. I had observed for some time that the Chamberlain, Serge Soltikoff, was more assiduous than usual in his attendance at court. He always came there in company with Leon Narichkine, who amused every one by his originality, of which I have already reported several traits. Serge Soltikoff was the aversion of the Princess Gagarine, of whom I was very fond, and in whom I even reposed confidence. Leon Narichkine was looked upon as a person of no sort of consequence, but very original. Soltikoff insinuated himself as much as possible into the good graces of the Tchoglokoffs. As these people were neither amiable, nor clever, nor amusing, he must have had some secret object in these attentions. Madame Tchoglokoff was at this time pregnant, and frequently indisposed. As she pretended that I amused her during the summer quite as much as in the winter, she often requested me to visit her. Soltikoff, Leon Narichkine, the Princess Gagarine, and some others, were generally at her apartments, whenever there was not a concert at the Grand Duke's, or theatricals at court. The concerts were very wearisome to M. Tchoglokoff, who always assisted at them; but Soltikoff discovered a singular mode of keeping him occupied. I cannot conceive how he contrived to excite in a man so dull, and so utterly devoid of talent and imagination, a passion for versifying and composing songs which had not even common sense. But having made this discovery, whenever any one wished to get rid of M. Tchoglokoff, it was only necessary to ask him to make a new song. Then, with much *empressement,* he would go and sit down in a corner of the room, generally near the stove, and set to work upon his song—a business which took up the evening. The song would be pronounced charming, and thus he was continually encouraged to make new ones. Leon Narichkine used to set them to music, and sing them with him; and while all this was going on, we conversed without restraint. I once had a large book of these songs, but I know not what has become of it.

During one of these concerts, Serge Soltikoff gave me to understand what was the object of his assiduous attentions.

I did not reply to him at first. When he again returned to the subject, I asked him what it was he wanted of me? Hereupon he drew a charming and passionate picture of the happiness which he promised himself. I said to him, "But your wife, whom you married for love only two years ago, and of whom you were supposed to be passionately fond—and she, too, of you—what will she say to this?" He replied that all was not gold that glitters, and that he was paying dearly for a moment of infatuation. I did all I could to make him change his mind—I really expected to succeed in this—I pitied him. Unfortunately, I listened also. He was very handsome, and certainly had not his equal at the Imperial court, still less at ours. He was not wanting in mind, nor in that finish of accomplishments, manner, and style which the great world gives, and especially a court. He was twenty-six years old. Take him all in all, he was by birth, and by many other qualities, a distinguished gentleman. As for his faults, he managed to hide them. The greatest of all was a love of intrigue and a striking want of principle. These were not as yet unfolded to my eyes.

I held out all the spring, and a part of the autumn. I saw him almost every day, and made no change in my conduct towards him. I was the same to him as I was to all others, and never saw him but in the presence of the court, or of a part of it. One day, to get rid of him, I made up my mind to tell him that he was misdirecting his attentions. I added, "How do you know that my heart is not engaged elsewhere?" This, however, instead of discouraging him, only made his pursuit all the more ardent. In all this there was no thought of the dear husband, for it was a known and admitted fact, that he was not at all amiable, even to the objects with whom he was in love; and he was always in love; in fact, he might be said to pay court to every woman, except the one who bore the name of his wife; she alone was excluded from all share of his attentions.

In the midst of all this, Tchoglokoff invited us to a hunting party on his island, whither we went in a skiff, our horses being sent on before. Immediately on our arrival I mounted my horse, and we went to find the dogs. Soltikoff seized the moment when the rest were in pursuit of the hares to ap

proach me and speak of his favorite subject. I listened more attentively than usual. He described to me the plan which he had arranged for enshrouding, as he said, in profound mystery, the happiness which might be enjoyed in such a case. I did not say a word. He took advantage of my silence to persuade me that he loved me passionately, and he begged that I would allow him to hope, at least, that he was not wholly indifferent to me. I told him he might amuse himself with hoping what he pleased, as I could not prevent his thoughts. Finally he drew comparisons between himself and others at the court, and made me confess that he was preferable to them. From that he concluded that he was preferred. I laughed at all this, but I admitted that he was agreeable to me. At the end of an hour and a half's conversation, I desired him to leave me, since so long a conversation might give rise to suspicion. He said he would not go unless I told him that I consented. I answered, "Yes, yes; but go away." He said, "Then it is settled," and put spurs to his horse. I cried after him, "No, no;" but he repeated, "Yes, yes." And thus we separated.

On our return to the house, which was on the island, we had supper, during which there sprung up such a heavy gale from the sea, that the waves rose so high that they even reached the steps of the house. In fact, the whole island was under water to the depth of several feet. We were obliged to remain until the storm had abated, and the waters retreated, which was not until between two and three in the morning. During this time, Soltikoff told me that heaven itself had favored him that day, by enabling him to enjoy my presence for a longer time, with many other things to the same effect. He thought himself already quite happy. As for me, I was not at all so. A thousand apprehensions troubled me, and I was unusually dull, and very much out of conceit with myself. I had persuaded myself that I could easily govern both his passions and my own, and I found to my great surprise that both tasks were difficult, if not impossible.

In the meanwhile Madame Tchoglokoff, who never lost sight of her favorite project of watching over the succession, took me aside one day and said, "Listen to me, I must

speak to you with all sincerity." I opened my eyes and ears, and not without cause. She began with a long preamble, after her fashion, respecting her attachment to her husband, her own prudent conduct, what was necessary and what was not necessary for ensuring mutual love and facilitating conjugal ties; and then she went on to say, that occasionally there were situations in which a higher interest demanded an exception to the rule. I let her talk on without interruption, not knowing what she was driving at, a good deal astonished, and uncertain whether it was not a snare she was laying for me, or whether she was speaking with sincerity. Just as I was making these reflections in my own mind, she said to me, "You shall presently see whether I love my country, and whether I am sincere; I do not doubt but you have cast an eye of preference upon some one or other; I leave you to choose between Sergius Soltikoff and Leon Narichkine—if I do not mistake, it is the latter." Here I exclaimed, "No, no! not at all." "Well, then," she said, "if it be not Narichkine, it is Soltikoff." To that I made no reply, and she went on saying, "You shall see that it will not be I who will throw difficulties in your way." I played the simpleton to such a degree, that she scolded me for it several times, both in town and in the country, whither we went after Easter.

In the course of the month of May, I again had indications of pregnancy. We went to Liberitza, an estate of the Grand Duke, twelve or fourteen verstes from Moscow. The stone house which was on it, had been built a long time ago by Prince Menchikoff, and was now falling to decay, so that we could not live in it. As a substitute, tents were set up in the court, and every morning, at two or three o'clock, my sleep was broken by the sound of the ax, and the noises made in building a wooden wing, which was being hurriedly erected, within two paces, so to speak, of our tents, in order that we might have a place to live in during the remainder of the summer. The rest of our time we spent in hunting, walking, or riding. I no longer went on horseback, but in a cabriolet. About the Feast of St. Peter we returned to Moscow. I was seized with such drowsiness that I slept every day till noon, and then it was only with diffi-

culty that I was awakened in time for dinner. The Feast of St. Peter was kept in the usual way: I was present at Mass, at the dinner, the ball, and the supper.

Next morning I felt great pains in my loins. Madame Tchoglokoff summoned a midwife, who predicted the miscarriage, which actually occurred the following night. I might have been with child two or three months. For thirteen days I was in great danger, as it was suspected that a portion of the after-birth had remained behind. This circumstance was kept a secret from me. At last, on the thirteenth day, it came away of itself—without pain, or even a struggle. In consequence of this accident I had to keep my room for six weeks, during which the heat was insupportable. The Empress came to see me the day I fell ill, and appeared to be affected by my state. During the six weeks that I kept to my room I was nearly tired to death. The only society I had was Madame Tchoglokoff, who came but rarely, and a little Kalmuck girl, whom I liked for her pretty, agreeable ways. I frequently cried from ennui. As for the Grand Duke, he was mostly in his own room, where one of his valets, a Ukrainian, named Karnovitch, a fool as well as a drunkard, did his best to amuse him; furnishing him with toys, with wine, and such other strong liquors as he could procure, without the knowledge of M. Tchoglokoff, who, in fact, was deceived and made a fool of by every one. But in these nocturnal and secret orgies with the servants of the chamber, among whom were several young Kalmucks, the Grand Duke often found himself ill-obeyed and ill-served; for, being drunk, they knew not what they did, and forgot that they were with their master, and that that master was the Grand Duke. Then his Imperial Highness would have recourse to blows with his stick, or the blade of his sword, but in spite of all this, he was ill-obeyed; and more than once he had recourse to me, complaining of his people, and begging me to make them listen to reason. On these occasions I used to go to his rooms, give them a good scolding, and remind them of their duties, when they would instantly resume their proper places. This made the Grand Duke often say to me, and also to Bressan, that he could not conceive how I managed those people; for, as for himself, though he

belabored them soundly, yet he could not make them obedient, while I, with a single word, could get them to do whatever I wished.

One day when I went for this purpose into the apartments of his Imperial Highness, I beheld a great rat, which he had had hung—with all the paraphernalia of an execution—in the middle of a cabinet, formed by means of a partition. I asked him what all this meant. He told me that this rat had committed a crime; one which, according to the laws of war, was deserving of capital punishment; it had climbed over the ramparts of a fortress of cardboard which he had on the table in his cabinet, and had eaten two sentinels, made of pith, who were on duty at the bastions. He had had the criminal tried by martial law, his setter having caught him, and he was immediately hung, as I saw, and was to remain there exposed to the public gaze for three days, as an example. I could not help bursting into a loud laugh at the extreme folly of the thing, but this greatly displeased him. Seeing the importance he attached to the matter, I retired, excusing myself on account of my ignorance, as a woman, of military law; but this did not prevent his being very much out of humor with me on account of my laughter. In justification of the rat, however, it may at least be said, that he was hung without having been questioned or heard in his own defense.

(1754)

In the month of February I had some signs of pregnancy. On Easter Sunday, during mass, Tchoglokoff fell ill of the dry colic; they gave him various remedies, but his disease only grew worse. During Easter week, the Grand Duke, with the gentlemen of our court, went out riding. Serge Soltikoff was of the number. I remained at home, for they were afraid to let me go out in my present condition, especially as I had twice miscarried.

On the 10th, or the 11th of May, we set out from the palace of Moscow. I was in a carriage with the wife of Count Alexander Schouvaloff, the most tiresome woman that it is possible to imagine. Madame Vladislava, and the midwife, whom, as I was pregnant, they said I could not do without,

were with us. I was tired to death in that carriage, and did nothing but cry.

Soltikoff, she said, dared not come near me, because of the restraint and constant presence of the Schouvaloffs, both husband and wife. All I wanted was the merest trifle—only a few moments of conversation. At last she succeeded. After this tedious journey of twenty-nine days, we reached St. Petersburg and the Summer Palace. The Grand Duke at once reëstablished his concerts. This gave me sometimes the opportunity of a little conversation; but my hypochondria had become such that at every moment, and at every word, my eyes filled with tears, and my mind was disturbed with apprehensions; in a word, I could not get it out of my head that everything tended to the removal of Serge Soltikoff.

We went to Peterhoff. I walked a great deal, but in spite of this my melancholy followed me. In the month of August we returned to the city, to occupy again the Summer Palace. It was a death-blow to me when I learned that, for my accouchement, they were preparing apartments close to, and forming part of those belonging to the Empress. Alexander Schouvaloff took me to see them; I found two rooms, gloomy, and with only one issue, like all those of the Summer Palace; the hangings were of ugly crimson damask, there was scarcely any furniture, and no kind of convenience. I saw that I should be isolated there, without any sort of company, and thoroughly wretched. I said so to Soltikoff and to the Princess Gagarine, who, though they bore no love to each other, had nevertheless a point of union in their friendship for me. They saw the matter as I did, but it was impossible to remedy it. I was to go on the Wednesday to these apartments, which were far removed from those of the Grand Duke. I went to bed on Tuesday evening, and in the night awoke with labor-pains. I called Madame Vladislava, who went to fetch the midwife. She pronounced that I was in labor. The Grand Duke, who was sleeping in his own room, was awakened, as also Count Alexander Schouvaloff. The latter sent word to the Empress, who was not long in coming. It was about two o'clock in the morning. I was very ill. At last, towards noon the next day, the 20th September, I gave birth to a son. As soon as

it was dressed the Empress called in her confessor, who gave the child the name of Paul, after which the Empress immediately bade the midwife take the child up and follow her.

I remained on the bed on which I had been confined. Now this bed was placed opposite a door through which I could see the light; behind me were two large windows which did not close properly, and on the right and left of this bed were two doors, one of which opened into my dressing-room, and the other into the room in which Madame Vladislava slept. As soon as the Empress left, the Grand Duke also went away, as likewise did M. and Madame Schouvaloff, and I saw no one again until three o'clock in the afternoon. I had perspired a great deal, and begged Madame Vladislava to change my linen, and put me into my own bed, but she told me that she dare not. She sent several times to call the midwife, who, however, did not come. I asked for something to drink, but still received the same answer. At last, after three hours, the Countess Schouvaloff arrived, very elaborately dressed. When she saw me lying just where she had left me, she was very angry, and said it was enough to kill me. This was very consolatory, certainly. I had been in tears from the time of my delivery, pained by the neglect in which I was left, after a severe labor; uncomfortably accommodated, lying between doors and windows, which did not shut close, no one daring to lift me into my bed, which was not two paces off, and to which I had not the strength to crawl. Madame Schouvaloff departed immediately and went, I think, to fetch the midwife; for the latter came in about half an hour afterwards, and told us that the Empress was so taken up with the child that she would not let her go away for a moment.

As for me no one gave me a thought. This forgetfulness or neglect was not at all flattering. I was dying of thirst. At last they placed me on my bed, and I did not see a living soul for the rest of the day, nor did any one send even to ask after me. The Grand Duke, for his part, did nothing but drink with all he could find, and the Empress was taken up with the child. In the city and throughout the empire the joy at this event was great. The next day I began to feel an excruciating rheumatic pain, from the

hip down the thigh and left leg. This pain prevented me from sleeping and this brought on a violent fever. In spite of all this, the attentions I received next day were just of the same character. I saw no one, and no one inquired after me. The Grand Duke, indeed, did come into my room for a moment, and then went away, saying, that he had not time to stop. I did nothing but weep and moan in my bed. Nobody was in my room but Madame Vladislava; in her heart she was sorry for me, but she had not the power to remedy this state of things. Besides, I never liked to be pitied nor to complain. I had too proud a spirit for that, and the very idea of being unhappy, was insupportable to me.

(1755)

About this time, I learned that the conduct of Sergius Soltikoff had been anything but prudent, whether in Sweden or at Dresden. Besides, he had made love to all the women he met. At first I would not believe these reports; but at last they came from so many quarters, that even his friends could not exculpate him. This year I became more than ever attached to Anne Narichkine. Her brother-in-law, Leon, contributed much to this. He always made a third with us, and there was no end to his nonsense. He used sometimes to say to us, "I have a *bijou,* which I mean to give to whichever of you two shall behave the best, and you will be very much obliged to me for it." We let him talk on, without troubling ourselves to inquire what this *bijou* was.

The Narichkines were more companionable than the rest. Among them I reckon Madame Siniavine and Madame Ismaïloff, Leon's sisters, together with the wife of his elder brother, of whom I have already spoken. Leon, more absurd than ever, and regarded by every one as a person of no sort of consequence, as was indeed the case, had got into the habit of running continually backwards and forwards between the Grand Duke's apartments and mine, never stopping long anywhere. In order to gain admittance into my room, he used to mew like a cat at my door, and when I answered him, he would come in. On the 17th of December, between six and seven o'clock in the evening, he announced himself in this fash-

ion, at my door; I desired him to come in. He began by presenting me with his sister-in-law's compliments, saying that she was not well; and adding, "but you ought to go and see her." I replied, "I would do so with pleasure; but you know I cannot go out without permission, and they will never give me permission to go to her house." "Oh! I will take you there," he said. "Are you mad," I replied; "how can I go with you? You would be sent to the Fortress, and God knows what trouble I should get into." "Oh! but no one will know of it; we will take proper precautions." "But how?" "Why, in this way: I will come and fetch you in an hour or two's time. The Grand Duke will take supper" (for a long time past, under the pretext of not wishing for supper I had been in the habit of staying in my own room), "he will remain at table for a considerable part of the night, leave it very tipsy, and go to bed" (since my confinement he generally slept in his own room); "for greater security you can dress in man's clothes, and we will go together to Anna Nikitichna Narichkine's." I began to feel tempted by the adventure, for I was constantly in my room with my books, and without any company. Finally, by dint of debating this mad project, for such it really was, and such it appeared to me at first, I saw in it the possibility of obtaining a moment's relaxation and amusement.

He departed, and I called a Kalmuck hair-dresser in my service, and desired him to bring me one of my male dresses, and all belonging to it, as I wanted to make it a present to some one. This young man was one of those persons who keep their mouths closed; and it was more difficult to make him speak than it was to make others hold their tongues. He executed his commission promptly, and brought me everything I wanted. I feigned a headache, and went to bed early. As soon as Madame Vladislava had undressed me and retired, I got up and dressed myself from head to foot as a man, arranging my hair in the best way I could. I was long in the habit of doing this, and was by no means awkward at it. At the time appointed, Narichkine made his appearance. He came through the apartments of the Grand Duke, and mewed at my door. I opened it, and we passed through a small ante-chamber into the hall, and entered his carriage

without having been seen by any one, laughing like a pair of fools at our escapade. Leon lived in the same house with his brother and sister-in-law.

On reaching it, we found there Anna Nikitichna, who suspected nothing, and also Count Poniatowsky. Leon announced one of his friends, whom he begged might be well received, and the evening passed in the wildest gayety. After a visit of an hour and a half's duration, I took leave and returned home without accident, and without having been met by any one. The next day, which was the birthday of the Empress, both at court in the morning, and at the ball in the evening, we could not look one another in the face without being ready to burst out laughing at our last night's folly. Some days later, Leon prepared a return visit, which was to take place in my apartments, and, as before, he brought his company into my room so skillfully, that no suspicion was excited. Thus began the year 1756. We took a strange delight in these furtive interviews. Not a week passed without one or two, and occasionally even three of them taking place, sometimes at the residence of one party, sometimes at that of another; and if any of us happened to be ill, the visit was always to the invalid. Sometimes at the theater, without speaking, and simply by means of certain signs previously agreed on, even although we might be in different boxes, and some of us, perhaps, in the pit; yet, by a sign, each one knew where to go, and no mistake ever occurred between us, except that on two occasions I had to return home on foot, which, after all, was only a walk.

I seized, one day, a favorable opportunity for saying to the Grand Duke, that since he found the affairs of Holstein so troublesome to regulate, and regarded them as a sample of what he would have one day to settle when the Empire of Russia fell to his lot, I thought he must look forward to that charge as something more oppressive still; thereupon he repeated what he had often said to me before—that he felt he was not born for Russia; that he did not suit the Russians nor the Russians him; and that he was persuaded he should perish in Russia. On this point I said to him what I had also said to him many a time before, that he ought not to allow himself to give way to so fatal an idea, but to do his best to

make himself liked by every one in Russia, and to ask the Empress to allow him an opportunity of making himself acquainted with the affairs of the empire.

The advice which I gave to the Grand Duke was, in general, good and salutary; but he who gives counsel can only do so in accordance with his own cast of mind and turn of thought—his own mode of action and manner of viewing things. But the great object of my counsels to the Grand Duke consisted in the fact that his way of doing things was quite different from mine, and the more we advanced in years the more marked did this difference become. I made it a point, in all things, to keep as close to truth as I possibly could, while he receded from it farther and farther every day, until at last he became a determined liar.

At the end of September we returned to the capital, and as I began to get large, I no longer appeared in public, believing that the period of my confinement was much nearer than it really proved to be. This was a source of annoyance to the Grand Duke, because, when I appeared in public, he very often complained of indisposition, in order to be able to remain in his own apartments, and, as the Empress also rarely appeared, the burden of the reception days, the *fêtes,* and the balls of the court devolved upon me, and when I could not be there, his Imperial Highness was teased to be present, in order that some one might represent her Majesty. He, therefore, began to be annoyed at my pregnancy, and one day took it in his head to say, in his apartment, before Leon Narichkine, and several others, "God knows where my wife gets her pregnancies, I don't very well know whether this child is mine, and whether I ought to take the responsibility of it." Leon Narichkine came running to me with these words, fresh from the Duke's lips. I was naturally enough alarmed at such a speech, and said to him, "How stupid you all are. Go and ask him to swear that he has not slept with his wife, and tell him if he will take this oath, you will go immediately and give information of it to Alexander Schouvaloff as grand inquisitor of the empire."

Leon actually went to his Imperial Highness, and asked him for this oath, but the answer he got was, "Go to the devil, and don't talk to me any more about that." This speech

of the Grand Duke, made so indiscreetly, gave me great pain, and I saw from that moment that three paths almost equally perilous presented themselves for my choice: first, to share the fortunes of the Grand Duke, be they what they might; secondly, to be exposed every moment to everything he chose to do either for or against me; or, lastly, to take a path entirely independent of all eventualities; to speak more plainly, I had to choose the alternative of perishing with him, or by him, or to save myself, my children, and perhaps the empire also, from the wreck of which all the moral and physical qualities of this Prince made me foresee the danger. This last choice appeared to me the safest.

(1759)

On the 1st of January, 1759, the court festivities terminated with a grand display of fireworks between the ball and the supper. As I still kept my room, I did not appear at court. Before the fireworks were let off, Count Peter Schouvaloff took it into his head to present himself at my door, to show me the plan of them before they were let off. Madame Vladislava told him I was asleep, but however she would go and see. It was not true that I was asleep; I was merely in bed, and had my usual little party, which then, as formerly, consisted of Mesdames Narichkine, Siniavine, Ismaïloff, and Count Poniatowsky. The latter, since his recall, had given out that he was ill, but came to visit me, and these ladies loved me sufficiently to prefer my company to the balls and *fêtes*. Madame Vladislava did not exactly know who was with me, but she was a great deal too shrewd not to suspect that there was some one. I had told her early that I should go to bed, as I felt weary; and then she did not afterwards disturb me.

Upon the arrival of Count Schouvaloff, she came and knocked at my door. I drew the curtain on the side of the screen, and told her to enter. She came in, and brought me the message of Count Peter Schouvaloff, and I ordered her to admit him. While she went to execute this order, my friends behind the screen were bursting with laughter at the extreme absurdity of the scene—my being about to receive Count Schouvaloff, who would be able to swear that he had found me alone, and in bed, while there was only

a curtain which separated my gay little party from this most important personage, who was at that time the oracle of the court, and possessed the confidence of the Empress to a very high degree. In, therefore, he came, and brought me his plan for the fireworks. He was at the time Grand Master of Artillery. I began by making apologies for keeping him waiting—only having, I said, just awoke; I rubbed my eyes, saying that I was still quite sleepy. I told a story, not to make Madame Vladislava out a story-teller. After this, I entered into a rather long conversation with him, so much so even, that he appeared anxious to leave, in order not to keep the Empress waiting for the commencement of the fireworks. I then dismissed him. He took his departure, and I again drew aside the curtain. My company, from laughing so heartily, was beginning to feel hungry and thirsty. "Very well," I said, "you shall have something to eat and drink; it is only fair that while you are kind enough to give me your company, you should not die of hunger or thirst." I closed the curtain and rang; Madame Vladislava presented herself. I told her that I was starving, and desired her to bring me some supper. I said I must have at least six good dishes.

When it was ready it was brought to me, and I had it placed by the side of my bed, and told the servant not to wait. Then my friends from behind the screen came out like so many famished creatures to eat whatever they could find: the fun of the thing increased their appetite. In fact, this evening was one of the merriest I have ever passed in the whole course of my life. When the supper had been devoured, I had the remains cleared away in the same manner as it had been served. I fancy however the servants were a little surprised at my appetite. About the time the court supper had concluded, my party retired also very well pleased with their evening. Count Poniatowsky, when going out, always wore a wig of fair hair and a cloak, and to the question of the sentinels, "Who goes there?" was accustomed to answer that he was a musician to the Grand Duke. This wig made us laugh a good deal that day.

On the last days of the Carnival there was to be a Russian play at the court theater, and Count Poniatowsky begged me to be present, because rumors had been spread that it

was intended to send me back to my own country, to prevent my appearance in public, and I know not what besides, and that every time I did not appear at court or at the theater, every one was anxious to know the reason of my absence, as much perhaps from curiosity as from interest in me. I knew that the Russian drama was one of the things his Imperial Highness least liked, and even to talk of going there was enough to displease him seriously. On this occasion, too, in addition to his dislike of the national drama, he had another and more personal objection, namely, that it would deprive him of the company of the Countess Elizabeth Voronzoff; as she was in the ante-chamber along with the other maids of honor, it was there that his Imperial Highness enjoyed her conversation or her company at play. If I went to the theater these ladies were obliged to follow me—a circumstance which annoyed his Imperial Highness, who had then no other resource than to retire to his own apartments to drink. Notwithstanding all this, as I had promised to go to the play, I sent a message to Count Alexander Schouvaloff, desiring him to order a carriage for me, as I intended that day to go to the play. The Count came and told me that my intention of going to the theater was anything but agreeable to the Grand Duke. I replied that as I formed no part of the society of his Royal Highness, I thought it would be the same to him whether I was alone in my room or in my box at the theatre.

He went away, winking his eyes, as he always did whenever anything disturbed him. Some time afterwards, the Grand Duke came into my room. He was in a fearful passion, screaming like an eagle; accusing me of taking pleasure in enraging him, and saying that I had chosen to go to these plays because I knew he disliked them; but I represented to him that he ought not to dislike them. He told me that he would forbid my having a carriage. I replied that if he did I should go on foot, and that I could not imagine what pleasure he could find in compelling me to die of *ennui* in my rooms, with no other company but my dog and my parrot. After a long and very angry dispute on both sides, he went away, in a greater rage than ever, and I still persisted in my intention of going to the play. When it got near the time

for starting, I sent to ask Count Schouvaloff if the carriages were ready; he came and told me that the Grand Duke had forbidden any to be provided for me. Then I became really angry, and told him that I would go on foot, and that if he forbade the ladies and gentlemen from attending me I would go alone; and, besides, that I would write and complain to the Empress, both of the Duke and of him. "What will you say to her?" he asked. "I will tell her," I said, "the manner in which I am treated, and that you, in order to secure for the Grand Duke a rendezvous with my maids of honor, encourage him to prevent my going to the theater, where I might, perhaps, have the pleasure of seeing her Imperial Majesty; and besides this, I will beg of her to send me back to my mother, because I am weary of, and disgusted with, the part I play here: left alone and deserted in my room, hated by the Grand Duke, and not liked by the Empress, I want to be at rest, and a burden to no one; I want to be freed from the necessity of making every one who approaches me unhappy, and particularly my poor servants, of whom so many have been exiled, because I was kind to them, or wished to be so. It is thus that I shall write to her Imperial Majesty, and I will see, moreover, whether you yourself will not be the bearer of my letter."

My gentleman got frightened at the determined tone I assumed; he left me, and I sat down to write my letter to the Empress in Russian, making it as pathetic as I could. I began by thanking her for the kindness and favors with which she had loaded me ever since my arrival in Russia, saying that, unfortunately, the event proved that I did not deserve them, since I had only drawn upon myself the hatred of the Grand Duke and the very marked displeasure of her Imperial Majesty; that as I was unhappy and shut up in my own room, where I was deprived of even the most innocent amusements, I begged her earnestly to put an end to my sufferings, by sending me to my relations in any manner she judged proper; that as for the children, as I never saw them, though living in the same house with them, it made little difference to me whether I was in the same place with them or some hundreds of leagues distant; that I was well aware that she took better care of them than my poor powers would

enable me to do; that I ventured to entreat her to continue this care of them; that confident of this, I would pass the rest of my time with my relations, in praying for her, the Grand Duke, my children, and all those who had done me either good or evil; but that my health was reduced by grief to such a state, that I did what I could to preserve my life, at least; and that with this object I addressed myself to her for the permission to go to the waters, and thence to my relations.

Having written this letter, I summoned Count Schouvaloff, who, on entering, informed me that the carriages I had ordered were ready. I told him, while handing him my letter for the Empress, that he might inform the gentlemen and ladies who did not wish to accompany me to the theater, that I would dispense with their attendance. The Count received my letter, winking his usual wink, but as it was addressed to her Imperial Majesty, he dared not refuse it. He also gave my message to the equerries and ladies, and it was his Imperial Highness who decided who was to go with me, and who was to remain with him. I passed through the ante-chamber, where I found him seated with the Countess Voronzoff, playing at cards in a corner. He rose, and she also, when he saw me—a thing which, on other occasions, he never did. In this ceremony I replied by a low curtsey, and passed on. I went to the theater, where the Empress did not come on that occasion. I fancy it was my letter which prevented her. On my return, Count Schouvaloff told me that her Imperial Majesty would have an interview with me herself. The Count would seem to have informed the Grand Duke of my letter and the reply of the Empress, for, although from that time he never set foot in my room, he used his utmost endeavors to be present at the interview which the Empress was to have with me, and it was considered that this could not well be refused.

While waiting for this interview to take place, I kept myself quiet in my own apartments. I felt persuaded that if the Schouvaloffs had had any idea of sending me home, or of frightening me with the threats of doing so, I had taken the best method of disconcerting the project; for nowhere were they likely to meet with greater resistance to it than in the

mind of the Empress herself, who was not at all inclined to strong measures of this kind; besides, she remembered the old misunderstandings in her own family, and certainly would not wish to see them renewed in her time. Against me there could be only one point of complaint, which was, that her worthy nephew did not appear to me the most amiable of men, any more than I appeared to him the most amiable of women; and, as regarded this nephew, her opinions exactly coincided with my own. She knew him so well that for many years past she could not spend a quarter of an hour in his society without feeling disgust, or anger, or sorrow, and in her chamber, when he happened to be the subject of conversation, she would either melt into tears at the misfortune of having such a successor, or she would be unable to speak of him without exhibiting her contempt, and often applied to him epithets which he but too well merited. I have proofs of this in my hands, having found among her papers two notes written by her own hand, to whom I do not know, though one of them appears to have been for John Schouvaloff, and the other for Count Rasoumowsky, in which she curses her nephew, and wishes him at the devil. In one occurs this expression, *"My damned nephew has greatly vexed me;"* and in another she says, *"My nephew is a fool, the devil take him."* Besides, my mind was made up, and I looked upon my being sent away, or not, with a very philosophic eye. In whatever position it should please Providence to place me, I should never be without those resources which talent and determination give to each one according to his natural abilities, and I felt myself possessed of sufficient courage either to mount or descend without being carried away by undue pride on the one hand, or being humbled and dispirited on the other.

I knew that I was a human being, and, therefore, of limited powers, and then incapable of perfection, but my intentions had always been pure and good. If from the very beginning I had perceived that to love a husband who was not amiable, nor took any pains to be so, was a thing difficult, if not impossible; yet, at least, I had devoted myself both to him and his interests with all the attachment which a friend, and even a servant, could devote to his friend and

master. My counsel to him had always been the very best I could devise for his welfare, and, if he did not choose to follow it, the fault was not mine, but that of his own judgment, which was neither sound nor just. When I came to Russia, and during the first years of our union, had this Prince shown the least disposition to make himself supportable, my heart would have been opened for him, but when I saw that of all possible objects I was the one to whom he showed the least possible attention, precisely because I was his wife, it is not wonderful I should find my position neither agreeable nor to my taste, or that I should consider it irksome, or even painful. This latter feeling I suppressed more resolutely than any other; the pride and cast of my disposition rendered the idea of being unhappy most repugnant to me.

I used to say to myself, happiness and misery depend on ourselves; if you feel unhappy, raise yourself above unhappiness, and so act that your happiness may be independent of all eventualities. With such a disposition I was born with a great sensibility, and a face, to say the least of it, interesting, and which pleased at first sight, without art or effort. My disposition was naturally so conciliating, that no one ever passed a quarter of an hour in my company without feeling perfectly at ease, and conversing with me as if we had been old acquaintances. Naturally indulgent, I won the confidence of those who had any relations with me, because every one felt that the strictest probity and good-will were the impulses which I most readily obeyed, and, if I may be allowed the expression, I venture to assert, in my own behalf, that I was a true gentleman, whose cast of mind was more male than female, though, for all that, I was anything but masculine, for, joined to the mind and character of a man, I possessed the charms of a very agreeable woman. I trust I shall be pardoned for giving this candid expression of my feelings, instead of seeking to throw around them a veil of false modesty. Besides, this very writing must prove what I have asserted of mind, disposition, and character.

I have just said that I was pleasing, consequently half the road of temptation was already traversed, and it is in the very essence of human nature that, in such cases, the other

half should not remain untracked. For to tempt, and to be tempted, are things very nearly allied, and, in spite of the finest maxims of morality impressed upon the mind, whenever feeling has anything to do in the matter, no sooner is it excited than we have already gone vastly farther than we are aware of, and I have yet to learn how it is possible to prevent its being excited. Flight alone is, perhaps, the only remedy; but there are cases and circumstances in which flight becomes impossible, for how is it possible to fly, shun, or turn one's back in the midst of a court? The very attempt would give rise to remarks. Now, if you do not fly, there is nothing, it seems to me, so difficult as to escape from that which is essentially agreeable. All that can be said in opposition to it will appear but a prudery quite out of harmony with the natural instincts of the human heart; besides, no one holds his heart in his hand, tightening or relaxing his grasp of it at pleasure.

But to return to my narrative. The morning after the play, I gave out that I was unwell, and kept my room, waiting patiently for the decision of her Imperial Majesty upon my humble request. However, the first week in Lent I judged it prudent to go to my duty, in order to show my attachment to the Orthodox Church. The second or third week of Lent brought me another bitter affliction. One morning after I had risen, my servants informed me that Count Alexander Schouvaloff had sent for Madame Vladislava. This I thought somewhat strange. I waited her return anxiously, but in vain. About an hour after noon, Count Schouvaloff came to apprise me that her Majesty the Empress had thought fit to remove Madame Vladislava from me. I burst into tears, and said, that of course, her Imperial Majesty had a right to remove or place with me whomsoever she pleased, but that I was grieved to find, more and more, that all who came near me were so many victims devoted to the displeasure of her Imperial Majesty; and that in order that there might be fewer such victims, I begged and entreated him to request her Majesty to send me home to my relations as soon as possible, and thus put an end to a state of things which compelled me to be continually making some one or other miserable.

About half-past one, Count Schouvaloff entered the apartment, and told me that the Empress had asked for me. I arose, and followed him. We passed through several antechambers, entirely empty, and on arriving at the door of the gallery, I saw the Grand Duke enter by the opposite door, and perceived that he too was about to visit the Empress. I had never seen him since the day of the play; even when I had given out that my life was in danger, he neither came nor sent to inquire after my health. I afterwards learned that on this very day he had promised Elizabeth Voronzoff to marry her if I happened to die, and that both were rejoicing greatly at my condition.

Having at last reached her Imperial Majesty's room, I there found the Grand Duke. As soon as I perceived the Empress, I threw myself at her feet, and begged her earnestly, and with tears, to send me back to my relations. The Empress wished to raise me, but I remained at her feet; she appeared more grieved than angry, and said to me, with tears in her eyes, "Why do you wish me to send you home? Do you not remember that you have children?" I replied, "My children are in your Majesty's hands, and cannot be better placed, and I trust that you will not abandon them." She then said to me, "But what excuse should I give to the public in justification of this step?" "Your Imperial Majesty," I replied, "will state, if you think fit, the causes which have brought upon me your Majesty's displeasure, and the hatred of the Grand Duke." "But how will you manage to live when you are with your relatives?" I replied, "As I did before your Majesty did me the honor of bringing me here." To this she answered, "Your mother is a fugitive; she has been compelled to retire, and has gone to Paris." "I am aware of this," I said; "she was thought to be too much attached to the interests of Russia, and the King of Prussia has therefore persecuted her." The Empress again bid me rise, which I did, and she walked away from me to some distance, musing.

The apartment in which we were was long, and had three windows between which stood two tables, containing the gold toilet-service of the Empress. No one was in the room but myself, the Empress, the Grand Duke, and Alexander Schouvaloff. Opposite the Empress were some large screens,

in front of which was a couch. I suspected from the first that John Schouvaloff certainly, and perhaps also his cousin Peter, were behind these. I learnt afterwards that my conjecture was in part correct, and that John Schouvaloff actually was there. I stood by the side of the toilet-table, nearest to the door by which I entered, and noticed in the toilet-basin some letters folded up. The Empress again approached me, and said, "God is my witness how I wept when you were dangerously ill, just after your arrival in Russia. If I had not liked you, I should not have kept you." This I looked upon as an answer to what I had just said in reference to my having incurred her displeasure. I replied by thanking her Majesty for all the kindness and favor she had shown me then and since, saying that the recollection of them would never be effaced from my memory, and that I should always regard my having incurred her displeasure as the greatest of my misfortunes.

She then drew still nearer to me, and said, "You are dreadfully haughty: do you remember, that at the Summer Palace, I one day approached you, and asked if you had a stiff neck, because I noticed that you hardly bowed to me, and that it was from pride you merely saluted me with a nod." "Gracious heavens! madame," I said, "how could your Majesty possibly suppose that I should be haughty to you? I solemnly declare that it never once occurred to me that this question, asked four years ago, could have reference to any such thing." Upon this she said, "You fancy there is no one so clever as yourself." "If I ever had any such conceit," I replied, "nothing could be better calculated to undeceive me than my present condition and this very conversation, since I see that I have been stupid enough not to understand, till this moment, what you were pleased to say to me four years ago." During my conversation with her Majesty, the Grand Duke was whispering to Count Schouvaloff. She perceived this, and went over to them. They were both standing near the middle of the room. I could not very well hear what they were saying, as they did not speak loud, and the room was large. At last I heard the Grand Duke raise his voice and say, "She is dreadfully spiteful, and very obstinate." I then perceived they were talking about me, and,

addressing the Grand Duke, I observed, "If it is of me you are speaking, I am very glad to have this opportunity of telling you, in the presence of her Imperial Majesty, that I am indeed spiteful to those who advise you to commit injustice, and that I have become obstinate because I see that I have gained nothing by yielding, but your hostility." He immediately retorted, "Your Majesty can see how malicious she is by what she says herself." But my words made a very different impression on the Empress, who had infinitely more intellect than the Grand Duke.

I could plainly see as the conversation progressed, that although she had been recommended, or had herself, perhaps, resolved to treat me with severity, her feelings softened by degrees in spite of herself and her resolutions. She, however, turned towards him, and said, "Oh, you do not know all she has told me against your advisers, and against Brockdorff, relative to the man you have had arrested." This must naturally have appeared to the Duke a formal treason on my part. He did not know a word of my conversation with the Empress, at the Summer Palace, and he saw his dear Brockdorff, who had become so precious in his eyes, accused to her Majesty, and that by me. This, therefore, was to put us on worse terms than ever, and perhaps render us irreconcilable, as well as deprive me, for the future, of all share in his confidence. I was thunderstruck when I heard her relating to him, in my presence, what I had told her, and, as I believed, for his own good, and found it thus turned against me like a weapon of destruction. The Grand Duke, very much astonished at this disclosure, said, "Ah! here is an anecdote quite new to me; it is very interesting and proves her spitefulness." I thought to myself, "God knows whose spitefulness it proves." From Brockdorff her Majesty passed abruptly to the connection discovered between Stambke and Count Bestoujeff, and said to me, "I leave you to imagine how it is possible to excuse him for having held communication with a state-prisoner."

As my name had not appeared in this affair, I was silent, as if the matter did not concern me. Upon which the Empress approached me, and said, "You meddle with many things which do not concern you. I should not have dared

to have done so in the time of the Empress Anne. How, for instance, could you presume to send orders to Marshal Apraxine?" I replied, "I, madame? Never has such an idea entered my head." "What!" she said, "will you deny having written to him? There are your letters in that basin," and she pointed to them as she spoke. "You are forbidden to write." "True," I replied, "I have transgressed in this respect, and I beg your pardon for it; but since my letters are there, these three letters will prove to your Imperial Majesty that I have never sent him any orders; but that in one of them I informed him of what was said of his conduct." Here she interrupted me by saying, "And why did you write this to him?" I replied simply, "Because I took a great interest in the Marshal, whom I like very much. I begged him to follow your orders. Of the two other letters, one contains only my congratulations on the birth of his son; and in the other I merely presented to him the compliments of the new-year." Upon this she said, "Bestoujeff asserts that there were many others." I replied, "If Bestoujeff says that, he lies." "Very well, then," she said, "since he has told lies concerning you, I will have him put to the torture." She thought by this to frighten me, but I answered that she could, of course, act according to her sovereign pleasure, but that I had never written more than those three letters to Apraxine. She was silent, and appeared to be meditating.

I relate the most salient points of this conversation which have remained in my memory; but it would be impossible for me to recollect all that was said in the course of an interview which lasted an hour and a half at the least. The Empress walked to and fro in the apartment, sometimes addressing herself to me, sometimes to her nephew, but more frequently to Count Alexander Schouvaloff, with whom the Grand Duke conversed the greater part of the time, while the Empress was speaking to me. I have already said that I remarked in her Majesty's manner less of anger than of anxiety. As to the Grand Duke, during the whole interview he manifested much bitterness, animosity, and even passion towards me. He endeavored as much as he could to excite the anger of her Majesty against me, but as he did it so

stupidly, and displayed more anger than justice, he failed in his object, and the penetration and sagacity of the Empress disposed her rather to take my part.

She listened, with marked attention and a kind of involuntary approval, to my firm and temperate replies to my husband's outrageous statements, from which it was perfectly evident that his object was to clear out my place, in order to establish in it the favorite of the moment. But this might not be to the Empress' liking, neither might it suit the fancy of the Messrs. Schouvaloff to give themselves Count Voronzoff for a master; but all this transcended the judicial penetration of his Imperial Highness, who always believed in what he wished, and never would listen to anything which appeared the dominant idea of the moment; and on this occasion he dwelt so much upon it that the Empress approached me and said, in a low voice, "I have many other things to say to you, but I do not wish you to be embroiled more than you are already." And with a look and a movement of her head, she intimated that it was on account of the presence of the others that she would not speak. Perceiving this mark of sincere good-will at so critical a moment, my heart was moved, and I said to her, in a similar tone, "And I also am prevented from speaking, however earnest my desire to open to you my mind and heart." I saw that this made a favorable impression on her. Tears came into her eyes, and to conceal her emotion, and the extent to which she was moved, she dismissed us, observing that it was very late; and, in fact, it was nearly three o'clock in the morning. The Grand Duke went out first, I followed, and just as Alexander Schouvaloff was passing out after me, her Majesty called him back, and he remained with her. The Grand Duke strode on rapidly, as usual, but on this occasion I did not hurry myself to follow him. He entered his apartments, and I mine.

I was beginning to undress, in order to go to bed, when I heard some one knocking at the door by which I had entered. On asking who was there, Schouvaloff replied that it was he, and begged me to admit him, which I did. He desired me to dismiss my maids. They left the room. He then told me that the Empress had called him back, and

that, after talking to him for some time, she had charged him to bear to me her compliments, and to tell me not to distress myself, and that she would have another conversation with me quite alone. I made a low bow to the Count, and begged him to present my most humble respects to her Imperial Majesty, and thank her for her kindness, which had restored me to life. I told him that I should look forward to this second interview with the utmost impatience, and entreated him to hasten its time. He requested me not to speak of it to any one whatever, especially the Grand Duke, who, her Majesty saw, with regret, was greatly irritated against me. This I promised; though I could not help thinking to myself, "But if she regrets his irritation, why increase it by repeating our conversation at the Summer Palace, concerning those people whose society was brutalizing him?"

This unexpected restoration of the favor and confidence of the Empress, gave me, however, great pleasure. The next day I desired my confessor's niece to thank her uncle from me, for the signal service he had rendered me, by procuring for me this interview with her Majesty. On her return she told me that her uncle had heard that the Empress had called her nephew a fool, but said that the Grand Duchess had a great deal of sense. This remark came to me from more quarters than one, as well as that her Majesty, among her intimate associates, was constantly extolling my talents, often adding, "She loves truth and justice; she is a woman of great sense; but my nephew is a fool."

For the present, then, I might feel sure of not being sent home, since I was requested not even to speak of it; but I deemed it as well not to quit my room, and to continue there as if I did not expect my fate to be finally decided until the second audience which the Empress was to give. For this I had to wait a long time. I remember that on the 21st of April, 1759, my birthday, I never went out. The Empress, at her dinner-hour, sent me word by Count Alexander Schouvaloff that she drank to my health. I requested my thanks to be given to her for her kind remembrance of me upon this day of my unhappy birth, which, I added, I would curse, were it not also the day of my baptism. When the Grand Duke learned that the Empress had sent this message

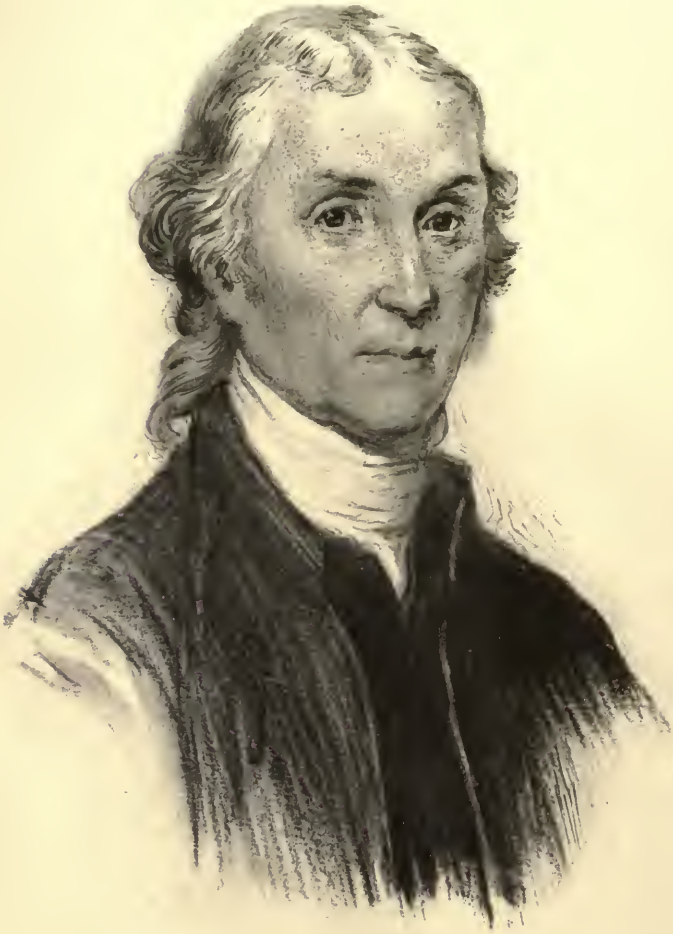
to me, he took it into his head to do the same. When his message was announced to me, I rose, and with a low curtsey expressed my thanks.

After the *fêtes* in honor of my birthday, and of the Empress' coronation day, which occurred within four days of each other, I still remained in my chamber, and never went out until Count Poniatowsky sent me word that the French Ambassador, the Marquis de l'Hôpital, had been eulogizing the firmness of my conduct, and observed that the resolution I maintained of never leaving my room could not but be productive of advantage to me: Taking this speech as the treacherous praise of an enemy, I determined to do exactly the contrary to what he advised; and, one Sunday, when it was least expected, I dressed, and came out of my private room. The moment I entered the apartment occupied by the ladies and gentlemen in waiting, I remarked their astonishment at seeing me. Some minutes after my appearance, the Grand Duke also entered. He looked equally astonished, and, while I was conversing with the company, he joined in the conversation, and addressed some remarks to me, to which I civilly replied.

At last, a few days before our going into the country, Count Alexander Schouvaloff came to inform me, on the part of the Empress, that I was to ask this afternoon, through him, permission to visit my children, and that then, upon my leaving them, I should have that second audience with her Majesty which had been so long promised. I did as I was directed, and, in presence of a number of people, I begged Count Schouvaloff to ask her Majesty's permission for me to see my children. He went away, and on his return told me that I could see them at three o'clock. I was punctual to the time, and remained with my children until Count Schouvaloff came to tell me that her Imperial Majesty could be seen. I went to her, and found her quite alone, and this time there were no screens in the room, and consequently we were able to speak freely. I began by thanking her for the audience she gave me, saying that her gracious promise of it had restored me to life. Upon which she said, "I expect you to reply with sincerity to all the questions that I may put to you." I assured her that she should hear nothing but

the strict truth from me, and that there was nothing I desired more than to open my heart to her without reserve. Then she again asked if there really had been no more than three letters written to Apraxine. I solemnly assured her, and with perfect truth, that such was the fact. Then she asked me for details concerning the Grand Duke's mode of life. . . .

[Here Catherine's manuscript abruptly ends.]



JOSEPH PRIESTLEY

THE NOTED CHEMIST, THEOLOGIAN, AND PHILOSOPHER

1733-1804

(INTRODUCTORY NOTE)

Joseph Priestley was born in England and there lived during most of his long and eminently useful career; but persecution finally drove him to emigrate to America, and the last ten years of his life were spent in Pennsylvania, mainly in the town of Northumberland.

Future ages will probably chiefly remember Priestley as a scientist, a great chemist, the discoverer of oxygen and of the composition of water. In his own day, however, he was most widely known as an author and theologian. He wrote numerous books of a popular and instructive character, supporting himself largely by their sale; and he entered upon endless theological and political disputations. He was bred as a minister of the "dissenting" church; but he carried his dissent so far that he could not often find a congregation willing to accept his ministry.

No one can help but honor Dr. Priestley for the straightforward honesty and earnestness with which he expounded his views. To very few men has it happened to be openly attacked at the same time for atheism and for Christianity; yet this was Priestley's fate. Some of his scientific confrères publicly ridiculed him for his superstitious religious beliefs at the very time when British churchmen were demanding his resignation from the ministry. In similar fashion his open support of the principles of the French Revolution led to his being elected by the Frenchmen a citizen of their republic, and to his having his house pillaged by a British mob. He supported his religious views in argument against the great philosopher Hume, and his chemical theories against Lavoisier.

Among his many literary works his autobiography will probably be the longest read. He wrote its main section in his English home at Birmingham, but added a brief supplement in Pennsylvania. It was published after his death, with notes and a continuation by his son, a son whose loyal devotion to his father's memory contrasts strikingly with Temple Franklin's treatment of the great autobiography of Franklin.

MEMOIRS OF DR. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF

HAVING thought it right to leave behind me some account of my *friends* and *benefactors*, it is in a manner necessary that I also give some account of *myself;* and as the like has been done by many persons, and for reasons which posterity has approved, I make no further apology for following their example. If my writings in general have been useful to my contemporaries, I hope that this account of myself will not be without its use to those who may come after me, and especially in promoting virtue and piety, which, I hope I may say, it has been my care to practice myself, as it has been my business to inculcate them upon others.

My father, Jonas Priestley, was the youngest son of Joseph Priestley, a maker and dresser of woolen cloth. His first wife, my mother, was the only child of Joseph Swift, a farmer at Shafton, a village about six miles south-east of Wakefield. By this wife he had six children, four sons and two daughters. I, the oldest, was born on the thirteenth of March, old style, 1733, at Fieldhead, about six miles south-west of Leeds, in Yorkshire. My mother dying in 1740, my father married again in 1745, and by his second wife had three daughters.

My mother having children so fast, I was very soon committed to the care of her father, and with him I continued with little interruption till my mother's death.

It is but little that I can recollect of my mother. I remember, however, that she was careful to teach me the Assembly's Catechism, and to give me the best instructions the little time that I was at home. Once in particular, when I was playing with a pin, she asked me where I got it; and on telling her that I found it at my uncle's, who lived very near to my father, and where I had been playing with my cousins, she made me carry it back again; no doubt to impress my mind, as it could not fail to do, with a clear idea of the distinction of property, and of the importance of attending to it. She died in the hard winter of 1739, not long after being delivered of my youngest brother; and having dreamed a little before her death that she was in a delightful place, which she

particularly described, and imagined to be heaven, the last words which she spake, as my aunt informed me, were "let me go to that fine place."

On the death of my mother I was taken home, my brothers taking my place, and was sent to school in the neighborhood. But being without a mother, and my father encumbered with a large family, a sister of my father's, in the year 1742, relieved him of all care of me, by taking me entirely to herself, and considering me as her child, having none of her own. From this time she was truly a parent to me, till her death in 1764.

My aunt was married to a Mr. Keighley, a man who had distinguished himself for his zeal for religion and for his public spirit. He was also a man of considerable property, and dying soon after I went to them, left the greatest part of his fortune to my aunt for life, and much of it at her disposal after her death.

By this truly pious and excellent woman, who knew no other use of wealth, or of talents of any kind, than to do good, and who never spared herself for this purpose, I was sent to several schools in the neighborhood, especially to a large free school, under the care of a clergyman, Mr. Hague, under whom, at the age of twelve or thirteen, I first began to make any progress in the Latin tongue, and acquired the elements of Greek. But about the same time that I began to learn Greek at this public school, I learned Hebrew on holidays of the dissenting minister of the place, Mr. Kirkby; and upon the removal of Mr. Hague from the free school, Mr. Kirkby opening a school of his own, I was wholly under his care. With this instruction, I had acquired a pretty good knowledge of the learned languages at the age of sixteen. But from this time, Mr. Kirkby's increasing infirmities obliged him to relinquish his school, and beginning to be of a weakly consumptive habit, so that it was not thought advisable to send me to any other place of education, I was left to conduct my studies as well as I could till I went to the academy at Daventry, in the year 1752.

From the time I discovered any fondness for books, my aunt entertained hopes of my being a minister, and I readily entered into her views. But my ill health obliged me to turn

my thoughts another way, and, with a view to trade, I learned the modern languages, French, Italian, and High Dutch, without a master; and in the first and last of them I translated and wrote letters, for an uncle of mine who was a merchant, and who intended to put me into a counting-house in Lisbon. A house was actually engaged to receive me there, and everything was nearly ready for my undertaking the voyage. But getting better health, my former destination for the ministry was resumed, and I was sent to Daventry, to study under Mr. Ashworth, afterwards Dr. Ashworth.

Looking back, as I often do, upon this period of my life, I see the greatest reason to be thankful to God for the pious care of my parents and friends, in giving me religious instruction. My mother was a woman of exemplary piety, and my father also had a strong sense of religion, praying with his family morning and evening, and carefully teaching his children and servants the Assembly's Catechism, which was all the system of which he had any knowledge. In the latter part of his life, he became very fond of Mr. Whitfield's writings, and other works of a similar kind, having been brought up in the principles of Calvinism, and adopting them, but without ever giving much attention to matters of speculation, and entertaining no bigoted aversion to those who differed from him on the subject.

The same was the case with my excellent aunt, she was truly Calvinistic in principle, but was far from confining salvation to those who thought as she did on religious subjects. Being left in good circumstances, her home was the resort of all the dissenting ministers in the neighborhood without distinction, and those who were the most obnoxious on account of their heresy were almost as welcome to her, if she thought them honest and good men (which she was not unwilling to do), as any others.

The most heretical ministers in the neighborhood were Mr. Graham, of Halifax, and Mr. Walker, of Leeds; but they were frequently my aunt's guests. With the former of these, my intimacy grew with my years, but chiefly after I became a preacher. We kept up a correspondence to the last, thinking alike on most subjects. To him I dedicated my "Disquisitions on Matter and Spirit," and when he died, he left me his

manuscripts, his Polyglot Bible, and two hundred pounds. Besides being a rational Christian, he was an excellent classical scholar, and wrote Latin with great facility and elegance. He frequently wrote to me in that language.

Thus I was brought up with sentiments of piety, but without bigotry, and having, from my earliest years, given much attention to the subject of religion, I was as much confirmed as I well could be in the principles of Calvinism, all the books that came in my way having that tendency.

The weakness of my constitution, which often led me to think that I should not be long-lived, contributed to give my mind a still more serious turn; and having read many books of *experiences,* and, in consequence, believing that a *new birth,* produced by the immediate agency of the Spirit of God, was necessary to salvation, and not being able to satisfy myself that I *had* experienced anything of the kind, I felt occasionally such distress of mind as it is not in my power to describe, and which I still look back upon with horror. Notwithstanding I had nothing very material to reproach myself with, I often concluded that God had forsaken me, and that mine was like the case of Francis Spira, to whom, as he imagined, repentance and salvation were denied. In that state of mind, I remember reading the account of the man in the iron cage, in the "Pilgrim's Progress," with the greatest perturbation.

I imagine that even these conflicts of mind were not without their use, as they led me to think habitually of God and a future state. And though my feelings were then, no doubt, too full of terror, what remained of them was a deep reverence for divine things, and in time a pleasing satisfaction which can never be effaced, and, I hope, was strengthened as I have advanced in life, and acquired more rational notions of religion. The remembrance, however, of what I sometimes felt in that state of ignorance and darkness, gives me a peculiar sense of the value of rational principles of religion, and of which I can give but an imperfect description to others.

As *truth,* we cannot doubt, must have an advantage over *error,* we may conclude that the want of these peculiar feelings is compensated by something of greater value, which arises to others from always having seen things in a just and

pleasing light; from having always considered the Supreme Being as the kind parent of all his offspring. This, however, not having been my case, I cannot be so good a judge of the effects of it. At all events, we ought always to inculcate just views of things, assuring ourselves that *proper feelings and right conduct* will be the consequence of them.

In the latter part of the interval between my leaving the grammar-school and going to the academy, which was something more than two years, I attended two days in the week upon Mr. Haggerstone, a dissenting minister in the neighborhood, who had been educated under Mr. Maclaurin. Of him I learned geometry, algebra, and various branches of mathematics, theoretical and practical. And at the same time I read, but with little assistance from him, "Gravesend's Elements of Natural Philosophy," "Watts's Logic," "Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding," &c., and made such a proficiency in other branches of learning, that when I was admitted at the academy (which was on Coward's foundation,) I was excused all the studies of the first year, and a great part of those of the second.

In the same interval I spent the latter part of every week with Mr. Thomas, a baptist minister, now of Bristol, but then of Gildersome, a village about four miles from Leeds, who had had no learned education. Him I instructed in Hebrew, and by that means made myself a considerable proficient in that language. At the same time I learned Chaldee and Syriac, and just began to read Arabic. Upon the whole, going to the academy later than is usual, and being thereby better furnished, I was qualified to appear there with greater advantage. . . .

All the while I was at the academy, I never lost sight of the great object of my studies, which was the duties of a Christian minister, and there it was that I laid the general plan which I have executed since. Particularly I there composed the first copy of my "Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion," Mr. Clark, to whom I communicated my scheme, carefully perusing every section of it, and talking over the subject of it with me.

But I was much discouraged even then with the *impediment in my speech,* which I inherited from my family, and which

still attends me. Sometimes I absolutely stammered, and my anxiety about it was the cause of much distress to me. However, like St. Paul's *thorn in the flesh,* I hope it has not been without its use. Without some such check as this, I might have been disputatious in company, or might have been seduced by the love of popular applause as a preacher; whereas my conversation and my delivery in the pulpit having nothing in them that was generally striking, I hope I have been more attentive to qualifications of a superior kind.

It is not, I believe, usual for young persons in dissenting academies, to think much of their future situations in life. Indeed, we are happily precluded from that, by the impossibility of succeeding in any application for particular places. We often, indeed, amused ourselves with the idea of our dispersion in all parts of the kingdom, after living so happily together; and used to propose plans of meeting at certain times, and smile at the different appearance we should probably make after being ten or twenty years settled in the world. But nothing of this kind was ever seriously resolved upon by us. For my own part, I can truly say I had very little ambition, except to distinguish myself by my application to the studies proper to my profession; and I cheerfully listened to the first proposal that my tutor made to me, in consequence of an application made to him, to provide a minister for the people of Needham Market, in Suffolk, though it was very remote from my friends in Yorkshire, and a very inconsiderable place.

When I went to preach at Needham as a candidate, I found a small congregation, about an hundred people, under a Mr. Meadows, who was superannuated. They had been without a minister the preceding year, on account of the smallness of the salary; but there being some respectable and agreeable families among them, I flattered myself that I should be useful and happy in the place, and therefore accepted the unanimous invitation to be assistant to Mr. Meadows, with a view to succeed him when he died. He was a man of some fortune.

This congregation had been used to receive assistance from both the Presbyterian and Independent funds; but upon my telling them that I did not choose to have anything to do with the Independents, and asking them whether they were able

to make up the salary they promised me, (which was forty pounds per annum) without any aid from the latter fund, they assured me they could. I soon, however, found that they deceived themselves; for the most that I ever received from them, was in the proportion of about thirty pounds per annum, when the expense of my board exceeded twenty pounds.

Notwithstanding this, everything else for the first half year appeared very promising, and I was happy in the success of my schemes for promoting the interest of religion in the place. I catechized the children, though there were not many, using Dr. Watt's catechism; and I opened my lectures on the theory of religion from the "Institutes," which I had composed at the academy, admitting all persons to attend them, without distinction of sex or age; but in this I soon found that I had acted imprudently. A minister in that neighborhood had been obliged to leave his place on account of Arianism; and though nothing had been said to me on the subject, and from the people so readily consenting to give up the Independent fund, I thought they could not have much bigotry among them, I found that when I came to treat of the *Unity of God,* merely as an article of religion, several of my audience were attentive to nothing but the soundness of my faith in the doctrine of the Trinity.

Also, though I had made it a rule to myself to introduce nothing that could lead to controversy into the pulpit; yet making no secret of my real opinions in conversation, it was soon found that I was an Arian. From the time of this discovery, my hearers fell off apace, especially as the old minister took a decided part against me. The principal families, however, still continued with me; but notwithstanding this, my salary fell far short of thirty pounds per annum; and if it had not been for Dr. Benson and Dr. Kippis, especially the former, procuring me now and then an extraordinary five pounds, from different charities, I do not believe that I could have subsisted. I shall always remember their kindness to me, at a time when I stood in so much need of it.

When I was in this situation, a neighboring minister, whose intimate friend had conformed to the church of England, talked to me on that subject. He himself, I perceived, had no great objection to it; but rejecting the proposal, as a thing

that I could not think of, he never mentioned it to me any more.

To these difficulties, arising from the sentiments of my congregation, was added that of the failure of all remittances from my aunt, owing in part to the ill offices of my orthodox relations; but chiefly to her being exhausted by her liberality to others, and thinking that when I was settled in the world, I ought to be no longer burdensome to her. Together with me, she had brought up a niece, who was almost her only companion, and being deformed, could not have subsisted without the greatest part, at least, of all she had to bequeath. In consequence of these circumstances, though my aunt had always assured me that, if I chose to be a minister, she would leave me independent of the profession, I was satisfied she was not able to perform her promise, and freely consented to her leaving all she had to my cousin; I had only a silver tankard as a token of her remembrance. She had spared no expense in my education, and that was doing more for me than giving me an estate.

But what contributed greatly to my distress, was the *impediment in my speech,* which had increased so much, as to make preaching very painful, and took from me all chance of recommending myself to any better place. In this state, hearing of the proposal of one Mr. Angier, to cure all defects of speech, I prevailed upon my aunt to enable me to pay his price, which was twenty guineas; and this was the first occasion of my visiting London. Accordingly, I attended him about a month, taking an oath not to reveal his method, and I received some temporary benefit; but soon relapsed again, and spoke worse than ever. When I went to London, it was in company with Mr. Smithson, who was settled at Harlestown, in Norfolk. By him I was introduced to Dr. Kippis, and Dr. Benson, and by the latter to Dr. Price, but not at that time.

At Needham I felt the effect of a low despised situation, together with that arising from the want of popular talents. There were several vacancies in congregations in that neighborhood, where my sentiments would have been no objection to me, but I was never thought of. Even my next neighbor, whose sentiments were as free as my own, and known to be so, declined making exchanges with me, which, when I left that

part of the country, he acknowledged was not owing to any dislike his people had to me as heretical, but for other reasons, the more genteel part of his hearers always absenting themselves when they heard I was to preach for him. But visiting that country some years afterwards, when I had raised myself to some degree of notice in the world, and being invited to preach in that very pulpit, the same people crowded to hear me, though my elocution was not much improved, and they professed to admire one of the same discourses they had formerly despised.

Notwithstanding these unfavorable circumstances, I was far from being unhappy at Needham. I was boarded in a family from which I received much satisfaction, I firmly believed that a wise Providence was disposing everything for the best, and I applied with great assiduity to my studies, which were classical, mathematical, and theological. These required but few books. As to experimental philosophy, I had always cultivated an acquaintance with it, but I had not the means of prosecuting it.

With respect to miscellaneous reading, I was pretty well supplied by means of a library belonging to Mr. S. Alexander, a Quaker, to which I had the freest access. Here it was that I was first acquainted with any person of that persuasion; and I must acknowledge my obligation to many of them in every future stage of my life. I have met with the noblest instances of liberality of sentiment, and the truest generosity among them.

My studies, however, were chiefly theological. Having left the academy, as I have observed, with a qualified belief of the doctrine of *atonement,* such as is found in Mr. Tomkin's book, entitled "Jesus Christ the Mediator," I was desirous of getting some more definite ideas on the subject, and with that view set myself to peruse the whole of the "Old and New Testament," and to collect from them all the texts that appeared to me to have any relation to the subject. This I therefore did with the greatest care, arranging them under a great variety of heads. At the same time I did not fail to note such *general considerations* as occurred to me while I was thus employed. The consequence of this was, what I had no apprehension of when I began the work, viz. a full per-

suasion that the doctrine of atonement, even in its most qualified sense was wholly untenable. . . .

I proposed to give lectures to grown persons in such branches of science as I could conveniently procure the means of doing; and I began with reading about twelve lectures on the *use of the globes,* at half-a-guinea. I had one course of ten hearers, which did something more than pay for my globes; and I should have proceeded in this way, adding to my apparatus as I should have been able to afford it, if I had not left that place, which was in the following manner.

My situation being well known to my friends, Mr. Gill, a distant relation by my mother, who had taken much notice of me before I went to the academy, and had often lent me books, procured me an invitation to preach as a candidate at Sheffield, on the resignation of Mr. Wadsworth. Accordingly I did preach as a candidate, but though my opinions were no objection to me there, I was not approved. But Mr. Haynes, the other minister, perceiving that I had no chance at Sheffield, told me that he could recommend me to a congregation at Nantwich, in Cheshire, where he himself had been settled; and as it was at a great distance from Needham, he would endeavor to procure me an invitation to preach there for a year certain. This he did, and I gladly accepting of it, removed from Needham, going thence to London by sea, to save expense. This was in 1758, after having been at Needham just three years.

At Nantwich I found a good-natured friendly people, with whom I lived three years very happily; and in this situation I heard nothing of those controversies which had been the topics of almost every conversation in Suffolk; and the consequence was, that I gave little attention to them myself. Indeed it was hardly in my power to do it, on account of my engagement with a school, which I was soon able to establish, and to which I gave almost all my attentions; and in this employment, contrary to my expectations, I found the greatest satisfaction, notwithstanding the confinement and labor attending it.

My school generally consisted of about thirty boys, and I had a separate room for about half a dozen young ladies. Thus I was employed from seven in the morning until four

in the afternoon, without any interval except one hour for dinner, and I never gave a holiday on any consideration, the red letter days, as they are called, excepted. Immediately after this employment in my own school rooms, I went to teach in the family of Mr. Tomkinson, an eminent attorney, and a man of large fortune, whose recommendation was of the greatest service to me; and here I continued until seven in the evening. I had therefore but little leisure for reading or for improving myself in any way, except what necessarily arose from my employment.

Being engaged in the business of a schoolmaster, I made it my study to regulate it in the best manner, and I think I may say with truth, that in no school was more business done, or with more satisfaction, either to the master or the scholars, than in this of mine. Many of my scholars are probably living, and I am confident that they will say that this is no vain boast.

At Needham I was barely able, with the greatest economy, to keep out of debt, (though this I always made a point of doing at all events) but at Nantwich my school soon enabled me to purchase a few books, and some philosophical instruments, as a small air-pump, an electrical machine, &c. These I taught my scholars in the highest class to keep in order, and make use of, and by entertaining their parents and friends with experiments, in which the scholars were generally the operators, and sometimes the lecturers too, I considerably extended the reputation of my school; though I had no other object originally than gratifying my own taste. I had no leisure, however, to make any original experiments until many years after this time.

As there were few children in the congregation, (which did not consist of more than sixty persons, and a great proportion of them traveling Scotchmen), there was no scope for exertion with respect to my duty as a minister. I therefore contented myself with giving the people what assistance I could at their own houses, where there were young persons; and I added very few sermons to those which I had composed at Needham, where I never failed to make at least one every week.

Being boarded with Mr. Eddowes, a very sociable and sensible man, and at the same time the person of the greatest

property in the congregation, and who was fond of music, I was induced to learn to play a little on the English flute, as the easiest instrument; and though I was never a proficient in it, my playing contributed more or less to my amusement many years of my life. I would recommend the knowledge and practice of music to all studious persons; and it will be better for them, if, like myself, they should have no very fine ear, or exquisite taste; as by this means they will be more easily pleased, and be less apt to be offended when the performances they hear are but indifferent.

At Nantwich I had hardly any literary acquaintance besides Mr. Brereton, a clergyman in the neighborhood, who had a taste for astronomy, philosophy, and literature in general. I often slept at his house, in a room to which he gave my name. But his conduct afterwards was unworthy of his profession.

Of dissenting ministers, I saw most of Mr. Keay, of Whitchurch, and Dr. Harwood, who lived and had a school at Congleton, preaching alternately at Leek and Wheelock, the latter place about ten miles from Nantwich. Being both of us schoolmasters, and having in some respect the same pursuits, we made exchanges for the sake of spending a Sunday evening together every six weeks in the summer time. He was a good classical scholar, and a very entertaining companion.

In my congregation there was (out of the house in which I was boarded) hardly more than one family in which I could spend a leisure hour with much satisfaction, and that was Mr. James Caldwall's, a Scotchman. Indeed, several of the traveling Scotchmen who frequented the place, but made no long stay at any time, were men of very good sense; and what I thought extraordinary, not one of them was at all Calvinistical.

My engagements in teaching allowed me but little time for composing anything while I was at Nantwich. There, however, I recomposed my "Observations on the Character and Reasoning of the Apostle Paul," as mentioned before. For the use of my school, I then wrote an English Grammar,[1] on a new plan, leaving out all such technical terms as were bor-

[1] Printed in 1761.

rowed from other languages, and had no corresponding modifications in ours, as the future tense, &c., and to this I afterwards subjoined "Observations for the Use of Proficients in the Language,"[2] from the notes which I collected at Warrington; where, being tutor in the languages and Belles Lettres, I gave particular attention to the English language, and intended to have composed a large treatise on the structure and present state of it. But dropping the scheme in another situation, I lately gave such parts of my collection as I had made no use of, to Mr. Herbert Croft, of Oxford, on his communicating to me his design of compiling a dictionary and grammar of our language.

The academy at Warrington was instituted when I was at Needham, and Mr. Clark knowing the attention that I had given to the learned languages when I was at Daventry, had then joined with Dr. Benson and Dr. Taylor, in recommending me as tutor in the languages. But Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Aikin, whose qualifications were superior to mine, was justly preferred to me. However, on the death of Dr. Taylor, and the advancement of Mr. Aikin to be tutor in divinity, I was invited to succeed him. This I accepted, though my school promised to be more gainful to me. But my employment at Warrington would be more liberal, and less painful It was also a means of extending my connections. But, as I told the persons who brought me the invitation, viz. Mr. Seddon and Mr. Holland of Bolton, I should have preferred the office of teaching the mathematics and natural philosophy, for which I had at that time a great predilection.

My removal to Warrington was in September, 1761, after a residence of just three years at Nantwich. In this new situation I continued six years, and in the second year I married a daughter of Mr. Isaac Wilkinson, an ironmaster, near Wrexham, in Wales, with whose family I had become acquainted, in consequence of having the youngest son, William, at my school at Nantwich. This proved a very suitable and happy connection, my wife being a w man of an excellent under-

[2] Printed in 1772, at London. His lectures on the "Theory of Language and Universal Grammar," were printed the same year at Warrington. David Hume was made sensible of the gallicisms and peculiarities of his style by reading this grammar. He acknowledged it to Mr. Griffith, the bookseller.

standing, much improved by reading, of great fortitude and strength of mind, and of a temper in the highest degree affectionate and generous; feeling strongly for others, and little for herself. Also, greatly excelling in everything relating to household affairs, she entirely relieved me of all concern of that kind, which allowed me to give all my time to the prosecution of my studies, and the other duties of my station. And though, in consequence of her father becoming impoverished, and wholly dependent on his children, in the latter part of his life, I had little fortune with her, I unexpectedly found a great resource in her two brothers, who had become wealthy, especially the elder of them. At Warrington I had a daughter, Sarah, who was afterwards married to Mr. William Finch, of Heath Forge, near Dudley.

It was while I was at Warrington, that I published my "Chart of Biography," though I had begun to construct it at Nantwich. Lord Willoughby, of Parham, who lived in Lancashire, being pleased with the idea of it, I, with his consent, inscribed it to him; but he died before the publication of it: the "Chart of History," corresponding to it, I drew up some time after at Leeds.

I was in this situation, when, going to London,[3] and being introduced to Dr. Price, Mr. Canton, Dr. Watson, (the physician) and Dr. Franklin, I was led to attend to the subject of experimental philosophy, more than I had done before; and having composed all the lectures I had occasion to deliver, and finding myself at liberty for any undertaking, I mentioned to Dr. Franklin an idea that had occurred to me of writing the history of discoveries in electricity, which had been his favorite study. This I told him might be an useful work, and that I would willingly undertake it, provided I could be furnished with the books necessary for the purpose. This he readily undertook, and my other friends assisting him in it, I set about the work, without having the least idea of doing anything more than writing a distinct and methodical account of all that had been done by others. Having, how-

He always spent one month in every year in London, which was of great use to him. He saw and heard a great deal. He generally made additions to his library, and his chemical apparatus. A new turn was frequently given to his ideas. New and useful acquaintances were formed, and old ones confirmed.—His son.

ever, a pretty good machine, I was led, in the course of my writing the history, to endeavor to ascertain several facts which were disputed; and this led me by degrees into a large field of original experiments, in which I spared no expense that I could possibly furnish.

These experiments employed a great proportion of my leisure time; and yet before the complete expiration of the year, in which I gave the plan of my work to Dr. Franklin, I sent him a copy of it in print. In the same year, five hours of every day were employed in lectures, public or private, and one two months' vacation I spent chiefly at Bristol, on a visit to my father-in-law.

This I do not mention as a subject of boasting. For many persons have done more in the same time; but as an answer to those who have objected to some of my later writings, as hasty performances. For none of my publications were better received than this "History of Electricity," which was the most hasty of them all. However, whether my publications have taken up more or less time, I am confident that more would not have contributed to their perfection, in any essential particular; and about anything farther I have never been very solicitous. My object was not to acquire the character of a fine writer, but of an useful one. I can also truly say, that gain was never the chief object of any of my publications. Several were written with the prospect of certain loss.

During the course of my electrical experiments in this year, I kept up a constant correspondence with Dr. Franklin, and the rest of my philosophical friends in London; and my letters circulated among them all, as also every part of my history as it was transcribed. This correspondence would have made a considerable volume, and it took up much time; but it was of great use with respect to the accuracy of my experiments, and the perfection of my work.

After the publication of my "Chart of Biography," Dr. Percival of Manchester, then a student at Edinburgh, procured me the title of Doctor of Laws, from that university; and not long after my new experiments in electricity were the means of introducing me into the Royal Society, with the recommendation of Dr. Franklin, Dr. Watson, Mr. Canton, and Dr. Price. . . .

When I began these experiments, I knew very little of *chemistry,* and had in a manner no idea on the subject before I attended a course of chemical lectures, delivered in the academy at Warrington, by Dr. Turner, of Liverpool. But I have often thought that upon the whole, this circumstance was no disadvantage to me; as in this situation I was led to devise an apparatus, and processes of my own, adapted to my peculiar views. Whereas, if I had been previously accustomed to the usual chemical processes, I should not have so easily thought of any other; and without new modes of operation I should hardly have discovered anything materially new.[4]

My firse publication on the subject of air, was in 1772. It was a small pamphlet, on the method of impregnating water with fixed air; which being immediately translated into French, excited a great degree of attention to the subject, and this was much increased by the publication of my first paper of experiments, in a large article of the "Philosophical Transactions," the year following, for which I received the gold medal of the society. My method of impregnating water with fixed air, was considered at a meeting of the College of Physicians, before whom I made the experiments, and by them it was recommended to the Lords of the Admiralty, (by whom they had been summoned for the purpose) as likely to be of use in the sea scurvy.

The only person in Leeds who gave much attention to my experiments was Mr. Hey, a surgeon. He was a zealous Methodist, and wrote answers to some of my theological tracts; but we always conversed with the greatest freedom on philosophical subjects, without mentioning anything relating to theology. When I left Leeds, he begged of me the earthen trough, in which I had made all my experiments on air while I was there. It was such an one as is there commonly used for washing linen.

[4] This necessary attention to economy, also aided the simplicity of his apparatus, and was the means in some degree of improving it in this important respect. This plainness of his apparatus rendered his experiments easy to be repeated, and gave them accuracy. In this respect, he was like his great contemporary, Scheele, whose discoveries were made by means easy to be procured, and at small expense. The French chemists have adopted a practice quite the reverse.

I had two sons born to me at Leeds, Joseph and William, and though I was very happy there, I was tempted to leave it after continuing there six years, to go into the family of the Earl of Shelburne, now the Marquis of Lansdowne; he stipulating to give me two hundred and fifty pounds per annum, a house to live in, and a certainty for life in case of his death, or of my separation from him; whereas at Leeds my salary was only one hundred guineas per annum, and a house, which was not quite sufficient for the subsistence of my family, without a possibility of making a provision for them after my death.

I had been recommended to Lord Shelburne by Dr. Price, as a person qualified to be a literary companion to him. In this situation, my family being at Calne, in Wiltshire, near to his lordship's seat at Bowood, I continued seven years, spending the summer with my family, and a great part of the winter in his lordship's house in London. My office was nominally that of *librarian,* but I had little employment as such, besides arranging his books, taking a catalogue of them, and of his manuscripts, which were numerous, and making an index to his collection of private papers. In fact I was with him as a friend, and the second year made with him the tour of Flanders, Holland, and Germany, as far as Strasburgh; and after spending a month at Paris, returned to England. This was in the year 1774.

This little excursion made me more sensible than I should otherwise have been of the benefit of foreign travel, even without the advantage of much conversation with foreigners. The very sight of new countries, new buildings, new customs, etc., and the very hearing of an unintelligible new language, gives new ideas, and tends to enlarge the mind. To me this little time was extremely pleasing, especially as I saw everything to the greatest advantage, and without any anxiety or trouble, and had an opportunity of seeing and conversing with every person of eminence, wherever we came. . . .

When I went to his lordship, I had materials for one volume of "Experiments on Air," which I soon after published, and inscribed to him; and before I left him, I published three volumes more, and had materials for a fourth, which I published immediately on my settling in Birmingham. He en-

couraged me in the prosecution of my philosophical inquiries, and allowed me forty pounds per annum for expenses of that kind, and was pleased to see me make experiments to entertain his guests, and especially foreigners.

Notwithstanding the attention that I gave to philosophy in this situation, I did not discontinue my other studies, especially in theology and metaphysics. Here I wrote my "Miscellaneous Observations relating to Education," and published my "Lectures on Oratory and Criticism," which I dedicated to Lord Fitzmaurice, Lord Shelburne's eldest son. Here also I published the third and last part of my "Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion;" and having in the preface attacked the principles of Dr. Reid, Dr. Beattie, and Dr. Oswald, with respect to their doctrine of *common sense,* which they made to supersede all rational inquiry into the subject of religion, I was led to consider their system in a separate work, which, though written in a manner that I do not entirely approve, has, I hope, upon the whole, been of service to the cause of free inquiry and truth.

In the preface I had expressed my belief of the doctrine of *Philosophical Necessity,* but without any design to pursue the subject, and also my great admiration of Dr. Hartley's theory of the human mind, as indeed I had taken many opportunities of doing before. This led me to publish that part of his "Observations on Man," which related to the doctrine of association of ideas, detached from the doctrine of vibrations, prefixing "Three Dissertations," explanatory of his general system. In one of these I expressed some doubt of the immateriality of the sentient principle in man; and the outcry that was made on what I casually expressed on that subject can hardly be imagined. In all the newspapers, and most of the periodical publications, I was represented as an unbeliever in revelation, and no better than an Atheist.

This led me to give the closest attention to the subject, and the consequence was the firmest persuasion that man is wholly material, and that our only prospect of immortality is from the Christian doctrine of a resurrection. I therefore digested my thoughts on the subject, and published my "Disquisitions relating to Matter and Spirit:" also the subjects of "Socinianism" and "Necessity," being nearly connected with the doc-

trine of the materiality of man, I advanced several considerations from the state of opinions in ancient times in favor of the former; and in a separate volume, discussed more at large what related to the latter, dedicating the first volume of this work to Mr. Graham, and the second to Dr. Jebb.

It being probable that this publication would be unpopular, and might be a means of bringing odium on my patron, several attempts were made by his friends, though none by himself, to dissuade me from persisting in it. But being, as I thought, engaged in the cause of important truth, I proceeded without regard to any consequences, assuring them that this publication should not be injurious to his lordship.

In order, however, to proceed with the greatest caution, in a business of such moment, I desired some of my learned friends, and especially Dr. Price, to peruse the work before it was published; and the remarks that he made upon it led to a free and friendly discussion of the several subjects of it, which we afterwards published jointly; and it remains a proof of the possibility of discussing subjects mutually considered as of the greatest importance, with the most perfect good temper, and without the least diminution of friendship. This work I dedicated to our common friend Mr. Lee.

In this situation, I published my "Harmony of the Gospels," on the idea of the public ministry of Jesus having continued little more than one year, a scheme which I first proposed in the "Theological Repository;" and the Bishop of Waterford having in his "Harmony," published a defense of the common hypothesis, viz. that of its having been three years, I addressed a *letter to him* on the subject, and to this he made a reply in a separate work. The controversy proceeded to several publications on both sides, in the most amicable manner, and the last "Postscript," was published jointly by us both. Though my side of the question was without any advocates that I know of, and had only been adopted by Mr. Mann, who seemed to have had no followers, there are few persons, I believe, who have attended to our discussion of the subject, who are not satisfied that I have sufficiently proved what I had advanced. This controversy was not finished until after my removal to Birmingham.

Reflecting on the time that I spent with Lord Shelburne,

being as a guest in the family, I can truly say that I was not at all fascinated with that mode of life. Instead of looking back upon it with regret, one of the greatest subjects of my present thankfulness, is the change of that situation for the one in which I am now placed; and yet I was far from being unhappy there, much less so than those who are born to such a state, and pass all their lives in it. These are generally unhappy from the want of *necessary* employment; on which account chiefly there appears to be much more happiness in the middle classes of life, who are above the fear of want, and yet have a sufficient motive for a constant exertion of their faculties; and who have always some other object besides amusement.

I used to make no scruple of maintaining, that there is not only most virtue, and most happiness, but even most true politeness in the middle classes of life. For in proportion as men pass more of their time in the society of their equals, they get a better established habit of governing their tempers; they attend more to the feelings of others, and are more disposed to accommodate themselves to them. On the other hand, the passions of persons in higher life, having been less controlled, are more apt to be inflamed; the idea of their rank and superiority to others, seldom quits them; and though they are in the habit of concealing their feelings, and disguising their passions, it is not always so well done, but that persons of ordinary discernment may perceive what they inwardly suffer. On this account, they are really entitled to compassion, it being the almost unavoidable consequence of their education and mode of life. But when the mind is not hurt in such a situation, when a person born to affluence can lose sight of himself, and truly feel and act for others, the character is so godlike, as shows that this inequality of condition is not without its use. Like the general discipline of life, it is for the present lost on the great mass, but on a few it produces what no other state of things could do.

The greatest part of the time that I spent with Lord Shelburne, I passed with much satisfaction, his lordship always behaving to me with uniform politeness, and his guests with respect. But about two years before I left him, I perceived evident marks of dissatisfaction, though I never understood

the cause of it; and until that time he had been even lavish on all occasions in expressing his satisfaction in my society, to our common friends. When I left him, I asked him whether he had any fault to find with my conduct, and he said *none.*

At length, however, he intimated to Dr. Price, that he wished to give me an establishment in Ireland, where he had large property. This gave me an opportunity of acquainting him, that if he chose to dissolve the connection, it should be on the terms expressed in the writings, which we mutually signed when it was formed, in consequence of which I should be entitled to an annuity of an hundred and fifty pounds, and then I would provide for myself, and to this he readily acceded. He told Dr. Price that he wished our separation to be amicable, and I assured him that nothing should be wanting on my part to make it truly so. Accordingly, I expected that he would receive my visits when I should be occasionally in London, but he declined them.

However, when I had been some years settled at Birmingham, he sent an especial messenger, and common friend, to engage me again in his service, having, as that friend assured me, a deep sense of the loss of Lord Ashburton (Mr. Dunning) by death, and of Colonel Barre, by his becoming almost blind, and his want of some able and faithful friend, such as he had experienced in me; with other expressions more flattering than those. I did not choose, however, on any consideration, to leave the very eligible situation in which I now am, but expressed my readiness to do him any service in my power. His lordship's enemies have insinuated that he was not punctual in the payment of my annuity; but the contrary is true: hitherto nothing could have been more punctual, and I have no reason to suppose that it will ever be otherwise.

At Calne I had another son born to me, whom, at Lord Shelburne's request, I called Henry.

It was at the time of my leaving Lord Shelburne, that I found the great value of Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey's friendship, in such a manner as I certainly had no expectation of when our acquaintance commenced; especially by their introducing me to the notice of Mrs. Rayner, one of his hearers, and most zealous friends.

Notwithstanding my allowance from Lord Shelburne was

larger than that which I had at Leeds, yet my family growing up, and my expenses, on this and other accounts, increasing more than in proportion, I was barely able to support my removal. But my situation being intimated to Mrs. Rayner, besides smaller sums, with which she occasionally assisted me, she gave me an hundred guineas to defray the expense of my removal, and deposited with Mrs. Lindsey, which she soon after gave up to me, four hundred guineas, and to this day has never failed giving me every year marks of her friendship. Hers is, indeed, I seriously think, one of the first Christian characters that I was ever acquainted with, having a cultivated comprehensive mind, equal to any subject of theology or metaphysics, intrepid in the cause of truth, and most rationally pious.

Spending so much of my time in London, was the means of increasing my intimacy with both Mr. Lindsey and Mr. Lee, our common friend; who, amidst the bustle of politics, always preserved his attachment to theology, and the cause of truth. The Sunday I always spent with Mr. Lindsey, attending the service of his chapel, and sometimes officiating for him; and with him and Mrs. Lindsey I generally spent the evening of that day at Mr. Lee's, who then admitted no other company, and seldom have I enjoyed society with more relish.

My winter's residence in London was the means of improving my acquaintance with Dr. Franklin. I was seldom many days without seeing him, and being members of the same club, we constantly returned together. The difference with America breaking out at this time, our conversation was chiefly of a political nature, and I can bear witness that he was so far from promoting, as was generally supposed, that he took every method in his power to prevent a rupture between the two countries. He urged so much the doctrine of forbearance, that for some time he was unpopular with the Americans on that account, as too much a friend to Great Britain. His advice to them was to bear everything for the present, as they were sure in time to out-grow all their grievances; as it could not be in the power of the mother country to oppress them long.

He dreaded the war, and often said that, if the difference should come to an open rupture, it would be a war of *ten*

years, and he should not live to see the end of it. In reality the war lasted nearly eight years, but he did live to see the happy termination of it. That the issue would be favorable to America, he never doubted. The English, he used to say, may take all our great towns, but that will not give them possession of the country. The last day that he spent in England, having given out that he should leave London the day before, we passed together, without any other company; and much of the time was employed in reading American newspapers, especially accounts of the reception which the "Boston Port Bill," met with in America: and as he read the addresses to the inhabitants of Boston, from the places in the neighborhood, the tears trickled down his checks.

It is much to be lamented, that a man of Dr. Franklin's general good character, and great influence, should have been an unbeliever in Christianity, and also have done so much as he did to make others unbelievers. To me, however, he acknowledged that he had not given so much attention as he ought to have done, to the evidences of Christianity, and desired me to recommend to him a few treatises on the subject, such as I thought most deserving of his notice, but not of great length, promising to read them, and give me his sentiments on them. Accordingly, I recommended to him Hartley's evidences of Christianity in his observations on man, and what I had then written on the subject in my "Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion." But the American war breaking out soon after, I do not believe that he ever found himself sufficiently at leisure for the discussion. I have kept up a correspondence with him occasionally, ever since; and three of his letters to me were, with his consent, published in his miscellaneous works, in quarto. The first of them, which was written immediately on his landing in America, is very striking.

About three years before the dissolution of my connection with Lord Shelburne, Dr. Fothergill, with whom I had always lived on terms of much intimacy, having observed, as he said, that many of my experiments had not been carried to their proper extent on account of the expense that would have attended them, proposed to me a subscription from himself and some of his friends, to supply me with whatever sums I

should want for that purpose, and named a hundred pounds per annum. This large subscription I declined, lest the discovery of it (by the use that I should, of course, make of it) should give umbrage to Lord Shelburne, but I consented to accept of forty pounds per annum, which from that time he regularly paid me, from the contribution of himself, Sir Theodore Jansen, Mr. Constable, and Sir George Saville.

On my leaving Lord Shelburne, which was attended with the loss of one half of my income, Dr. Fothergill proposed an enlargement of my allowance for my experiments, and likewise for my maintenance, without being under the necessity of giving my time to pupils, which I must otherwise have done. And, considering the generosity with which this voluntary offer was made by persons who could well afford it, and who thought me qualified to serve the interests of science, I thought it right to accept of it: and I preferred it to any pension from the court, offers of which were more than once made.

At present I thank God I can say that my prospects are better than they have ever been before, and my own health, and that of my wife, better established, and my hopes as to the dispositions and future settlement of my children satisfactory.

I shall now close this account of myself with some observations of a general nature, but chiefly an account of those circumstances for which I have more particular reason to be thankful to that good being who has brought me hitherto, and to whom I trust I habitually ascribe whatever my partial friends think the world indebted to me for.

1. Not to enlarge again on what has been mentioned already, on the fundamental blessings of a religious and liberal education, I have particular reason to be thankful for a happy temperament of body and mind, both derived from my parents. My father, grandmother, and several branches of the family, were remarkably healthy, and long lived; and though my constitution has been far from robust, and was much injured by a consumptive tendency, or rather an ulcer in my lungs, the consequence of improper conduct of myself when I was at school, (being often violently heated with exercise, and as often imprudently chilled by bathing, &c.) from which

with great difficulty I recovered, it has been excellently adapted to that studious life which has so fortunately fallen to my lot.

I have never been subject to head-aches, or any other complaints that are peculiarly unfavorable to study. I have never found myself less disposed, or less qualified, for mental exertions of any kind at one time of the day more than another; but all seasons have been equal to me, early or late, before dinner or after, &c. And so far have I been from suffering by my application to study, (which however has never been so close or intense as some have imagined) that I have found my health improving from the age of eighteen to the present time; and never have I found myself more free from any disorder, than at present, I must, however, except a short time preceding and following my leaving Lord Shelburne, when I labored under a bilious complaint, in which I was troubled with gall stones, which sometimes gave me exquisite pain. But by confining myself to a vegetable diet, I perfectly recovered; and I have now been so long free from the disorder, that I am under no apprehension of its return.

It has been a singular happiness to me, and a proof, I believe, of a radically good constitution, that I have always slept well, and have awaked with my faculties perfectly vigorous, without any disposition to drowsiness. Also, whenever I have been fatigued with any kind of exertion, I could at any time sit down and sleep; and whatever cause of anxiety I may have had, I have almost always lost sight of it when I have got to bed; and I have generally fallen asleep as soon as I have been warm.[5]

As I have not failed to attend to the phenomena of my own mind, as well as to those of other parts of nature, I have not been insensible of some great defects, as well as some advantages, attending its constitution; having from an early period been subject to a most humbling failure of recollection, so that I have sometimes lost all ideas of both persons and things, that I have been conversant with. I have so completely forgotten what I have myself published, that in reading my own writings, what I find in them often appears perfectly new to

[5] My father was an early riser. He never slept more than six hours.—His son.

me, and I have more than once made experiments, the results of which had been published by me.

I shall particularly mention one fact of this kind, as it alarmed me much at the time, as a symptom of all my mental powers totally failing me, until I was relieved by the recollection of things of a similar nature having happened to me before. When I was composing the "Dissertations," which are prefixed to my "Harmony of the Gospels," I had to ascertain something which had been the subject of much discussion, relating to the Jewish passover, (I have now forgotten what it was) and for that purpose had to consult, and compare several writers. This I accordingly did, and digested the result in a compass of a few paragraphs, which I wrote in short hand. But having mislaid the paper, and my attention having been drawn off to other things, in the space of a fortnight, I did the same thing over again; and should never have discovered that I had done it twice, if, after the second paper was transcribed for the press, I had not accidentally found the former, which I viewed with a degree of terror.

Apprized of this defect, I never fail to note down, as soon as possible, everything that I wish not to forget. The same failing has led me to devise, and have recourse to, a variety of mechanical expedients to secure and arrange my thoughts, which have been of the greatest use to me in the composition of large and complex works; and what has excited the wonder of some of my readers would only have made them smile if they had seen me at work. But by simple and mechanical methods one man shall do that in a month, which shall cost another, of equal ability, whole years to execute. This methodical arrangement of a large work, is greatly facilitated by mechanical methods, and nothing contributes more to the perspicuity of a large work, than a good arrangement of its parts.

What I have known with respect to myself, has tended much to lessen both my admiration, and my contempt, of others. Could we have entered into the mind of Sir Isaac Newton, and have traced all the steps by which he produced his great works, we might see nothing very extraordinary in the process. And great powers with respect to some things are generally attended with great defects in others; and these may

not appear in a man's writings. For this reason, it seldom happens but that our admiration of philosophers and writers is lessened by a personal knowledge of them.

As great excellencies are often balanced by great, though not apparent defects, so great and apparent defects are often accompanied by great, though not apparent excellencies. Thus my defect in point of recollection, which may be owing to a want of sufficient coherence in the association of ideas formerly impressed, may arise from a mental constitution more favorable to new associations; so that what I have lost with respect to memory, may have been compensated by what is called invention, or new and original combinations of ideas. This is a subject that deserves attention, as well as everything else that relates to the affections of the mind.

Though I have often composed much in a little time, it by no means follows that I could have done much in a given time. For whenever I have done much business in a short time, it has always been with the idea of having time more than sufficient to do it in; so that I have always felt myself at ease, and I could have done nothing, as many can, if I had been hurried.

Knowing the necessity of this state of my mind to the dispatch of business, I have never put off anything to the last moment; and instead of doing that on the morrow which ought to be done to-day, I have often blamed myself for doing to-day what had better have been put off until to-morrow; precipitancy being more my fault than procrastination.

It has been a great advantage to me, that I have never been under the necessity of retiring from company in order to compose anything. Being fond of domestic life, I got a habit of writing on any subject by the parlor fire, with my wife and children about me, and occasionally talking to them, without experiencing any inconvenience from such interruptions. Nothing but reading, or speaking without interruption, has been any obstruction to me. For I could not help attending (as some can) when others spoke in my hearing. These are useful habits, which studious persons in general might acquire, if they would; and many persons greatly distress themselves, and others, by the idea that they can do nothing except in perfect solitude or silence.

Another great subject of my thankfulness to a good providence, is my perfect freedom from any embarrassment in my circumstances, so that, without any anxiety on the subject, my supplies have always been equal to my wants; and now that my expenses are increased to a degree that I had no conception of some years ago, I am a richer man than I was, and without laying myself out for the purpose. What is more, this indifference about an increase of fortune has been the means of attaining it. When I began my experiments, I expended on them all the money I could possibly raise, carried on by my ardor in philosophical investigations, and entirely regardless of consequences, except so far as never to contract any debt; and if this had been without success, my imprudence would have been manifest. But having succeeded, I was in time more than indemnified for all that I had expended.

My theological studies, especially those which made it necessary for me to consult the Christian fathers, &c., have also been expensive to me. But I have found my theological friends even more liberal than my philosophical ones, and all beyond my expectations.

In reflecting on my past life, I have often thought of two sayings of Jacob. When he had lost one of his sons, and thought of other things that were afflictions to him, he said, "All these things are against me," at the same time that they were in reality making for him. So the impediment in my speech, and the difficulties of my situation at Needham, I now see as much cause to be thankful for, as for the most brilliant scenes in my life.

Yet, frequently as I have changed my situation, and always for the better, I can truly say that I never wished for any change on my own account. I should have been contented even at Needham, if I could have been unmolested, and had bare necessaries. This freedom from anxiety was remarkable in my father, and therefore is in a manner hereditary to me; but it has been much increased by reflection; having frequently observed, especially with respect to Christian ministers, how often it has contributed to embitter their lives, without being of any use to them. Some attention to the improvement of a man's circumstances is, no doubt, right, because no man can tell what occasion he may have for money, especially

if he have children, and therefore I do not recommend my example to others. But I am thankful to that good providence which always took more care of me than ever I took of myself.

Hitherto I have had great reason to be thankful with respect to my children, as they have a prospect of enjoying a good share of health, and a sufficient capacity for performing the duties of their stations. They have also good dispositions, and as much as could be expected at their age, a sense of religion. But as I hope they will live to see this work, I say the less on this subject, and I hope they will consider what I say in their favor, as an incitement to exert themselves to act a Christian and useful part in life; that the care that I and their mother have taken of their instruction, may not be lost upon them, and that they may secure a happy meeting with us in a better world.

I esteem it a singular happiness to have lived in an age and country, in which I have been at full liberty both to investigate, and by preaching and writing to propagate, religious truth; that though the freedom I have used for this purpose was for some time disadvantageous to me, it was not long so, and that my present situation is such that I can with the greatest openness urge whatever appears to me to be the truth of the gospel, not only without giving the least offense, but with the entire approbation of those with whom I am particularly connected.

As to the dislike which I have drawn upon myself by my writings, whether that of the Calvinistic party, in or out of the church of England, those who rank with rational Dissenters, (but who have been exceedingly offended at my carrying my inquiries farther than they wished any person to do) or whether they be unbelievers, I am thankful that it gives less disturbance to me than it does to themselves; and that their dislike is much more than compensated by the cordial esteem and approbation of my conduct by a few, whose minds are congenial to my own, and especially that the number of such persons increases.

Birmingham, 1787.

THE END

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